

THE Harbinger of Light.

A
MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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In the up-hill fight which Spiritualism is constantly waging against the many religious and social influences opposing it, it is essential that it should be relieved from all impedimenta and dissociated from everything (not forming an integral part of it) which hinders its advancement. With this view, in the early part of the present year, we defined the dual aspects of Spiritualism, and its relation to primitive and modern Christianity, and in the present instance we purpose to consider it in its relationship to Freethought.

Before, however, we can do this it is essential to arrive at some understanding as to what is meant by the latter term, for whilst, like Christianity, it is in its essence admirable, in some of its modern manifestations it is the reverse, its very mention conveying to many sincere and well-disposed minds a sense of antagonism to the religious sentiment within them. "Thought," in itself is free; mortal man cannot stop or restrict its action save by impeding the supply of mental food, or persuading us not to exercise thought in some given direction; but the term is generally understood to include free expression, both orally as well as in script and typography, of the thoughts evolved or ideas formed in our minds.

Unrestricted thought, free enquiry, and liberty to express our honest convictions on all matters pertaining to the welfare of humanity, is an inalienable right of every man and woman; and anything which tends to check this in any of its stages is undoubtedly wrong. We think there are very few if any Spiritualists who will dissent from the above propositions. The religion of Spiritualism regards nothing as too sacred for investigation, but encourages man to acquire and disseminate knowledge from and in every available avenue; hence Spiritualism comprehends and includes genuine Freethought.

There is, however, a wide difference between this and the Materialistic stamp of Freethought with which it is too often confounded. The one comprehends matter, and spirit, in its scope; the other, matter and mind. The tendency of the former is constructive; of the latter, largely destructive. The one presents the truth it accumulates to the world, and points out what it conceives to be erroneous in accepted religious formulas or social customs; the other attacks indiscriminately all religious systems, and having decided that mind is the outcome of matter, and that their combined action is adequate to account for all natural phenomena, it persistently ignores the existence of spirit, whether of God or man, often treating with ridicule and contempt men of undoubted honesty and superior intelligence who have come to contrary conclusions. This is a bastard sort of Freethought, and unworthy of the name; yet from its prominence, too often mistaken for the genuine article, causing repulsion in the minds of many who would welcome the advent of a broader platform.

We have before argued and shown that Spiritualism embodies true Christianity, and we now assert that it includes Freethought in its widest and most comprehensive interpretation; but as Spiritualists, as a rule, discard the dogmas of Christianity, retaining only the essential principles, in like manner do they discard the dogmas of Materialistic Freethought. Eclectic in both its scientific and religious aspects, Spiritualism selects and appropriates all ideas in harmony with its central principles; it gives freely to the world its thought-treasures, and gleans in return scintillations of truth emitted from the minds and souls of those without its ranks. As a free interchange of commodities tends to the material wealth of nations, so does a free interchange of thought tend to the mental and intellectual wealth of the community; still it must be an interchange to be productive of any substantial good. The iconoclastic Freethinker forces his wares upon unwilling customers, who do not appreciate them. The philosophical Freethinker exhibits his in their most attractive form, and invites inspection, so that those who do take them, doing so on their intrinsic merits, appreciate them accordingly. The Spiritualists, as we have shown, belong to the latter class, and whilst they would not quarrel with their more bellicose brethren

ren over what appears at times an excessively free deliverance of thought, they as a rule prefer to circulate their thoughts in a calmer atmosphere. Nature's greatest operations are noiseless, and we can find no better teacher.

THE RELIGION OF TRUTH.

By H. J. BROWNE.

PART III.

THAT a day of awakening from the blind and culpable credulity of the past in regard to the infallibility and divine authority of the Bible is at hand, we have evidence on every side. Not only are many of its false and God-dishonouring doctrines repudiated by the thinking portion of those who regularly attend the churches of the various so-called Christian denominations, but from all parts, intelligence is from time to time being received that the more conscientious of the clergy of the different sects—men whose daily bread depends upon their adhesion to Bible infallibility—are openly admitting their disbelief in one or more of the absurd dogmas set forth therein. The more enlightened of both the clergy and laity are evidently beginning to realise the sinfulness as well as the irrationality of believing in a conception of Deity that is repugnant to their moral consciousness, and of continuing to worship a wicked God, one who is represented as having cursed all for the sin of one; as having created the wicked for the day of evil; as having sent lying prophets to deceive the people, in order that all might believe a lie and be condemned; as having threatened to laugh at them when their calamity cometh; one who is stated to be Omnipotent, yet permitted a rival to tempt and win over to wickedness the majority of His children; and who through such Omnipotence was consequently able to save mankind irrespective of conditions, but was unwilling to do so without the perpetration of the grossest act of injustice, viz., the innocent having to suffer for the guilty. The less bigoted of churchmen are beginning to perceive that "two wrongs cannot make a right"—that what is wicked on the part of man cannot be good on the part of God—that what is nonsense on a principle of reason cannot be sense on a principle of religion—and that truth is the most essential requisite of true religion. In the present day the more liberal of the clergy admit the invariability of natural law, and have ceased to pray that the order of nature may be violated. The diabolic doctrine of eternal punishment in a lake of fire and brimstone is now repudiated by the more intelligent, as doubtless in time will be all the other equally false dogmas of the Bible.

As has been truly remarked by the late John Stuart Mill, "The old opinions in religion, morals, and politics, are so much discredited in the more intellectual minds as to have lost a greater part of their efficiency for good, while they have still life enough in them to be a powerful obstacle to the growing up of any better opinions on these subjects." The fact is that people in general are beginning to find that the Biblical teachings fail to satisfy, not only the wants of man's developed intellect, but also the deep cravings of his inmost nature. Doubtless, ideas that have been received into the mind in youth are very difficult to eradicate in after years, still, in these days of freedom of thought and speech, reasoning minds cannot long continue to hug the fetters torped in superstitious times for the credulous. Priestcraft has well been termed "a despotism of spiritual tyranny which cunningly rivets the shackles of superstition and fear on the intelligence of the credulous and unsuspecting," and childhood is the time when these priestly fetters are most easily put on. Of this fact the priesthood is fully aware, as is evidenced by the anxiety evinced by the clergy to secure children for their schools in order to poison the minds of the youthful, when incapable of reasoning, with their irrational dogmas. When once these priestly shackles are securely riveted, their innocent creed-bound dupes, instead of being

ashamed of wearing the fetters of superstition, are proud of them, being evidently quite unconscious of the degraded position in which the prostitution of their intelligence at the shrine of folly has placed them. Poor mental slaves to priestly authority and superstition! They are truly to be pitied,

"For faith, fanatic faith, once wedded fast
To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last."

The origin of religious error can be traced to the beginning of the various man-invented Scriptures, which evidently have been written with the intention of overriding the Divine and natural rule of right implanted in the soul of man. The several writers of these Scriptures having assumed the position of Deity have thereby defiled the pure and simple sanctuary of the human mind. The false, irrational, and contradictory theories set forth therein, instead of having enlightened and elevated mankind, as believers in these divergent Scriptures falsely maintain, have led them into confusion, persecution, and strife, as past history and the innumerable conflicting religious sects still existing only too clearly prove.

The man-invented dogmas of Biblical and priestly authority may well be termed ecclesiastical designs upon the religious liberties of the people. Unfortunately, these clerical deceptions have in times past been only too successful; and, even in the present day of more general enlightenment, people as a rule seem totally blind to the fact that those men whom they so generously support and look up to as their spiritual teachers are in reality their religious deceivers. Priests and persons have been well termed "blind leaders of the blind," and faithfully described as a class of men who, having been educated in sophistry in order to perpetuate error and obscure truth, spend their lives in disseminating falsehood, if not willingly, in culpable ignorance. It must not be understood that it is the personal character of either priests or persons that I wish to assail; it is only the false and God-dishonouring dogmas which they uphold that I am desirous of exposing; neither is it the moral truths contained in the Bible, but the falsities which have been mixed up therewith, and which almost nullify the beneficial effects thereof, that I desire to submit for the consideration of those who are open to truth and reason. That there are many generous and well-disposed men among the clergy of the various denominations, no one can deny, but, as I have remarked, instead of being, as they profess to be, the spiritual teachers of the people, they are their religious deceivers, and they will continue to be so until they are paid for preaching the truth according to the dictates of the voice of God within, and not, as at present, in accordance with the articles of the church to which they respectively belong, however repugnant the irrational dogmas set forth therein may be to their moral consciousness.

The falsity of the primary dogma of the churches, viz., that the Bible is divinely inspired, is evident both from its internal and external evidences. Who that is free from prejudice can view the Pauline scheme of salvation otherwise than irrational, unjust, and totally unworthy of belief, for if salvation cometh by faith, and not by works, and if the sufferings of Jesus were an ample atonement only for the sins of the few who have been elected through grace, what incentive is there for men in general to strive after righteousness by practising good works? Can a system of religion which, under the specious name of faith, rests on the credulity of its dupes, which reigns by fear, and which to the great majority of mankind holds out no spark of hope, but cruelly threatens them with utter despair, be of divine authority or one that proclaims to all "glad tidings of great joy?" No, certainly not, even if it were so declared by all the Bibles, churches, and priests in the world. Granting that the worthy Jesus stood high above the moral plane of humanity, still it is absurd to credit him with the possession of absolute truth and goodness, which, being divine and eternal principles, cannot be fully represented in any individual. If he were God, as many declare him to be, then the Roman Catholics are fully justified in styling Mary the mother of God, and, as like produces like, they would be equally justified in calling her mother the grandmother of God.

Does this simple remark not illustrate the absurdity of the dogma of the Trinity? To assume that Jesus was a son of God in a different light to all the rest of God's children, and that He, of whom it is declared "defilement could not touch or sin pollute Perfection's unassailable purity," sent a seducing spirit, holy or otherwise, to "overshadow" the affianced bride of a Jewish carpenter, is not only grossly superstitious, but the very height of blasphemy. "They who thus stigmatise the Father, thereby dishonour the son." The false dogma so much cherished by all trinitarians, that the humble Jesus was in substance man and in essence God, was evidently borrowed from the man-god idea of heathen mythology. It is best refuted in the following lines:

"Talk of essence and substance and I know not what,
Either God made Christ or else He did not;
If He did, Christ's a creature that's plain to the view,
If not Christ's a God, and then we have two."

As has been truly written: "Of Jesus and his sufferings, the priesthood (with Paul at their head) have woven a great cloak whereby to cover their errors and wrongdoings," and by adopting the old Pagan idea of a triple Deity, and representing the indivisible Infinite as being "three-in-one, they have succeeded in mystifying and perplexing the credulous. The Church, in fact, has all along stood in the way to prevent the people from using their reasoning powers in religious matters and thereby of obtaining the light of truth. Her priests, totally devoid of spiritual knowledge, still point theatrically upwards to vacancy, and their unsuspecting dupes still applaud their solemn knavery. With unblushing assurance they speak about matters of which they have no real knowledge, little knowing that in the life to come they will have to make full compensation for all their misrepresentations and the evil effects thereof, ere they start on progression's upward path and learn the way of truth and life.

The progress of scientific discovery is, however, sounding the death-knell of Biblical infallibility, priestly authority, and ancient superstition. Science has demonstrated that matter though changeable is indestructible, as Aristotle affirmed; that it is convertible from a solid to a liquid, and from a liquid to a gaseous state, but cannot be put out of existence; that not a particle of matter can be absolutely annihilated, consequently it is eternal, and did not, as falsely stated in the Bible, spring from nothing. Science has also demonstrated that intense heat and light preceded alternate day and night, consequently the Biblical statement that in the beginning, or when this planet was solidifying, all was in darkness, is contrary to fact. Recent scientific discoveries have confirmed the theory of La Place, viz., that the atmosphere of our sun originally extended to the present limits of our solar system; therefore, instead of darkness having prevailed before there were day and night on this earth, there must have been, as I have stated, intense heat and light. The childish sophistry latterly adopted by Bibliolaters for the purpose of reconciling the erroneous statements in the Bible respecting the time occupied in the formation of the Earth with the facts brought to light by science, may appear perfectly satisfactory to those whose personal interests render them deaf to reason, and to those who on such matters are accustomed to put out their thinking to be done by others in the same way as they do their linen to be washed; but to those who value truth, and who consequently think for themselves, it only shows to what subterfuges Bibliolaters will resort in order to perpetuate Biblical falsehoods. There is evidently great truth in the old adage that most men love darkness rather than the light. Instead, however, of endorsing the Biblical saying—"Let God be true but every man a liar," those Bibliolaters, in order to justify their own opinions, would make Him, to whom "lying lips are abomination," untruthful. They have the impudence to declare that the word "day" in Genesis does not mean day, but an indefinitely long period of time. Unfortunately for them, however, their sophistry becomes palpable when the same interpretation is applied to the seventh day, on which the Lord is said to have rested from His labours and been "refreshed," and which day, in consequence thereof, men were required to keep holy.

According to their version the eighth commandment should run as follows: In six indefinite periods of time the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and on the seventh indefinite period of time He rested from His labours and hallowed it, wherefore the seventh indefinite period of time shall be kept holy. (See Exodus xxxi., 14 to 17 verses.)

Science has also proved that the laws of nature are unchangeable—"the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" whereas in the Bible God is represented as causing variations to occur in the order of nature, and as changing His laws at times. Unlike the Bible, with its Old and New Testaments, it is one and only God and its triune Deity, nature never brings in an amending act and is always consistent. The same natural laws having been in operation since the formation of this planet it necessarily follows that the Biblical statements to the contrary must be false and misleading. The invariability of natural law having been proved by science, and miraculous interpositions being totally irreconcilable therewith, it is evident that the Gospel of so-called divine revelation and the Gospel of nature are opposed to each other: the former assumes that every occurrence is brought about by a special fiat on the part of Deity, while the latter proves that all phenomena are the outcome of, and are in accordance with, those divine and immutable laws which permeate and govern all things. Instead of the Gospel of revelation and the Gospel of nature running parallel with each other, as falsely asserted by theologians, at almost every step they run counter to each other, and in each instance the errors of the one have to give way to demonstrable truths of the other. The Biblical doctrines so long upheld by the Church as to the Earth being the centre of the universe and to its being flat, have had to succumb to astronomical and geological demonstration to the contrary. In like manner the equally absurd dogmas of Papal and Biblical infallibility will eventually have to give way to truth and reason. We have only to refer to history to learn how frequently in the past, and with what reluctance, so-called revealed religion has had to modify its pretensions. As has been truly remarked, "Every new scientific discovery before being generally recognised passes through at least three stages. First, it is denounced as flatly contradictory to Scripture; then it is admitted to be reconcilable with Scripture; lastly, it is affirmed to be the very doctrine which Scripture all along maintained." That for which the noble Giordano Bruno was burnt at the stake at the instance of the Romish Church, has since been adopted by that Church, and is now taught in all so-called Christian schools as a religious truth. Biblical infallibility must inevitably, ere long, become obsolete, for surely a book which palpably and plainly contradicts natural facts and human experience can neither be of divine authority nor beneficial to mankind. If anything is divine natural facts must certainly be so, and these are the basis, not only of physical science, but also of true religion. Surely God's works cannot contradict His word? and surely Infinite Perfection cannot lie?

Instead of there being discord between nature and true religion, as there is between nature and so-called revealed religion, there is complete harmony, for truth is always consistent with itself and with every other truth. A lie is always inconsistent and injurious, and will not fit in with a truth, consequently it requires one or more lies to support it. Truth, on the other hand, is beneficial and can stand alone, for its best evidence is within. No assumed infallible authority, however ancient, revered, and popular it may be, can make that which is false true, or cause that which is true to be false. True religion and true science both confirm the truths of the Bible; it is only its falsities which they controvert. Both of them being founded on natural facts, which are older than any religion, it is impossible that they can be based on a written or printed book. A writer wisely observes: "There is no gift to man so great as reason; yet, in the matter of religion, no gift has been so greatly set at naught."

Bibliolaters have the effrontery to claim for the Bible the benefits which civilisation has brought about, not by the aid, but in spite of the Bible, in which worldly

wisdom, knowledge, and happiness, are said to be the enemies of man. Reason, which may be well termed God's highest gift to man, is represented in the Bible as being a false guide that will lead man to perdition; human virtues are called "filthy rags," and faith in that which is both irrational and false is stated to be the only means of salvation from the wrath of an angry and jealous God. The little knowledge and freedom which we possess are, therefore, in direct opposition to the Biblical injunctions against man's rights. These rights include freedom in the acquisition of knowledge, which is as old as humanity, and consequently is older than any Bible or Church. Astronomy, geology, physiology, chemistry, the art of printing, and even education, have all been denounced by the clergy, on the authority of the Bible, as wicked innovations, "antagonistic to religion and to God." Happily, however, the combined authority of the Bible, the Church, and the priesthood, is powerless in the long run against truth, which is eternal and invulnerable.

True religion differs from all credal religions, in that it demands freedom of thought, speech, and action, so long as these do not interfere with the like rights and equal freedom of others. In it reason's voice is upheld, and the Eternal Source of all conscious being—the great central Power of all love, wisdom, justice, and truth—is the only Deity worshipped. True religion, which is that of the soul, being formed by the law of right, is far above all credal differences; like its twin sister, science, it is founded on facts and knowledge, and having no prescribed creed, no infallible book, and no incomprehensible dogmas to interpret, it requires no priestly class to explain them, or rather to misrepresent them, as do false religions, which, being based on mere belief in ancient superstition and priestly authority, bear the same relation to true religion as do astrology to astronomy, alchemy to chemistry, and fiction to fact.

The true religionist is one who has risen above Bibles, churches, and priestly authority; one who is a law unto himself, being guided alone by natural facts, observation, and the divine monitor within. Like the true scientist, he repudiates the finality of knowledge, and eagerly accepts all newly discovered facts, even though they controvert his most cherished opinions. For the sake of truth he casts aside his dearest idols, braves the scorn of his bigoted friends, and earnestly seeks for more light. It is only the false religionists, and the false scientists, who are afraid of truths which are antagonistic to the views they hold; who are opposed to the progress of knowledge, from whatever source derived; and who denounce those who declare the discovery of facts that lead beyond the point of knowledge to which they have attained. Truth in itself is absolute and infinite; man's knowledge of it, whether in regard to science or religion, is, and always will be, relative and progressive. Whilst the world, however, applauds the discoverer of any scientific fact that is not antagonistic to popular religious opinion, it inconsistently denounces the man who proclaims any newly discovered religious truth, even if that truth should confirm a portion of the religious views popularly entertained. Is it, I would ask, in accordance with wisdom or common sense to say "thus far and no farther" to that which is all-important and beneficial to mankind? Can religious stagnation be commendable whilst scientific progress is essential to man's happiness? Can ignorance in one case be good, and in the other evil? Can we attain to too much knowledge on any subject? If not, then why should religious progression be opposed any more than scientific advancement? It is truly surprising to find that it is generally those who are loudest in deploring the wickedness of the world who are the most inveterate in their opposition to the promulgation of those spiritual truths by which alone the world can be regenerated and humanity made better and happier.

I prize those truths eternal which others proudly scorn,
As I love the cheerful sunshine upon a wintry morn.
I strive to gain more knowledge where'er 'tis to be found;
I search for it above, below, and find it all around.
It tells me of that wondrous Power, that Fountain of all Life;

It shows me that new beauties rise e'en out of deadly strife;
It proves that all misfortunes are but blessings in disguise;
That much of that for which men strive they truly should
despise;
It shows this life is but a stage on which we all must act,
That death of matter only is—of life 'tis not a fact.
As out of atoms worlds are formed, imbued with force and life
So out of thoughts man is evolved upon this stage of strife.
Conditions are but altered—man's character's the same,
When death removes him from this scene of honor or of
shame.
Then let us strive to act aright whilst on this stage of life,
So at that change we all may come with credit through the
strife.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END OF WORLDS.

BY CAMILLE FLAMMARION;

TRANSLATED BY

C. W. ROHNER, M.D., BENALLA.

IV.

RESURRECTION.

By the aid of the principles of thermodynamics it has been demonstrated that a meteorite which has fallen on the sun from the infinite depths of the heavens, arrives at that globe with the unheard-of velocity of 627,000 metres during the last second of its fall. The transformation of this motion into caloric, produces a heat which is 9000 times greater than that which would be produced by the combination of a quantity of oil equal in bulk to that of the meteorite in question. It is immaterial whether the meteorite be combustible or not, for its combustibility would add little or nothing to the immense heat produced by its mechanic shock. Were our earth to fall into the sun it would augment the solar heat sufficiently to support the usual solar radiation for fully 95 years; and we know how prodigious is this radiation or emission of heat and light, since it is two milliards times greater than the quantity of heat and light intercepted by the earth, and that it would be able to raise to the boiling point every hour 2900 milliards cubic myriameters of ice. Well, if the earth were arrested in its course round the sun gradually enough to prevent the heat caused by the stoppage from reducing it to vapour, it would fall upon the sun, arriving on its surface after a journey of 64 days, and its reunion with the sun would supply to our day-star a quantity of heat sufficient for its ordinary radiation during 95 years, although the addition of the bulk of the earth would only represent a mere atom.

A similar shock produced by the fall of Jupiter into the sun would supply it with a sufficient quantity of fuel to bear the ordinary expenditure of radiation for 32,000 years; the total amount of heat of gravitation produced by the fall of all the planets into the sun would furnish a supply of the usual emission of solar heat and light for the space of 45,580 years.

When, therefore, our sun will be extinguished, rolling as a dark globe through space, it would be able, like a new Phoenix, to rise from its ashes by meeting another extinct sun in its course; in consequence of which it would again light its torch of life for new-born earths, which the law of gravitation would detach from the thus formed nebula in exactly the same manner in which our present earth was originally detached, with the rest of its sister planets, from the nebula once represented by our present sun. At this very moment the sun travels with great speed towards the stars of the constellation of Hercules. Each star is animated with its own proper motion which carries it through space with its system. Several of these movements are rectilinear; hence there is nothing impossible in the assumption that these two groups of stars will one day meet in space, and this furnishes perhaps the key to the secret of a resurrection of the worlds.

At this time, no doubt, all the planets and the earth shall have fallen into the sun. The potential energy of gravitation created, according to Tyndall, simply through the difference of position of the attracting masses, has been the original form of all energy in the universe. In the same manner, and with the same amount of certainty with which the weights of a clock descend to their

lowest possible position, from which they can never raise themselves again unless a new force be communicated to them by some not exhausted agency, so also in exact proportion with the successive centuries will the planets in their turn fall into the sun. When one of them arrives at a distance of a few hundred thousand kilometers from the sun, provided the sun is still in a state of incandescence, it must melt and resolve itself into vapour in consequence of the effect of the radiating solar heat. Even if the planet is old and covered with a thick crust, it could not escape from its terrible destiny of absorption. If it does not become incandescent, like a falling star, by the friction produced in its passage through the solar atmosphere (photosphere), its first contact with the sun's surface would develop such an amount of light and heat as to vaporise it in an instant.

Finally, whether it be at the first shock or after two or three rebounds, like a cannon-ball rebounding from the surface of the earth or water, the whole mass of the attracted planet would be broken up, melted, and reduced into vapour by one of the concussions or blows which in a moment would produce several thousand times as much heat as would be obtained by a burning mass of coal of equal dimensions. Whatever may be the final destiny of the theory of which we have here given a brief outline, it is already a great deal to have been able to establish the conditions under which a sun would be formed with absolute certainty; to have been able to recognise in the force of gravitation acting upon a cold and darkened mass of matter, the source from which the stars of the firmament could have taken their origin; for whether we assume that the sun has been called into existence and its solar radiation maintained by the collision of cosmic masses, or whether we are inclined to conjecture that the central heat of our earth is the residuum of the heat developed by the shock of cold and extinct asteroids, there is no room for doubting that the assigned cause was not adequate to produce the effects attributed to it.

Perhaps it enters into the general destinies of the universe that the sun should only then take such a course when it has itself become extinct: and it is possible that this constitutes the final cause of the proper motion of all the suns in space. But at the same time we are able to conceive of a second procedure of destruction and resurrection of which the meteorites, the falling stars, and the comets would furnish important testimony. Whence come the meteorites?—from the ruins of other worlds.

How can a world be thus broken up into fragments? We do not know it, and the very fact appears to us to be opposed to the laws of gravitation. But what is gravitation itself in its essence? We do not know this either. Is this attractive force absolute? Can bodies not be brought into certain physical or chemical states in which gravitation becomes effaced? What are the tails of the comets, which are always opposed to the sun? It seems that they manifest the action of a repellant force, and consequently act contrary to the laws of gravitation. Well, let us admit for a moment that in consequence of the secular refrigeration, solidification, and desiccation of our globe, the earth arrives at a point when it begins to get loose in its texture, and that later on its constituent masses cease to obey those laws of cohesion and aggregation which now hold them together, our rocky globe would henceforth be formed to its very centre of materials in a state of simple juxtaposition, and no longer held together by a central force, like a cadaver which, abandoned to the work of destruction, leaves to each molecule composing it the liberty of separating itself from the body for ever, and to obey in future to the sway of new influences. What would become of this defunct planet—of this world-cadaver? The attraction of the moon, if then still in existence, would itself undertake the task of demolition by producing a tidal wave of fragments of earth instead of a liquid tide. Let the other planetary perturbations join in this work of disintegration, and in a few centuries our globe would be broken up, lose its spheroidal form, and its detached fragments would be sown broadcast along the path of its annual revolution. Here you

see the whole planetary system in ruins. All these ruins will gradually fall into the sun. And if such is also the final destiny of the sun, then that darkened and dissolved star itself, with all its constituent particles of the solar system will be carried away through space, and the fields of heaven would be sown over by the solar dust. Travelling thus as world-dust through the vast expanses of space, it would one day arrive at a point where it would come in contact with regions in which a process of new resurrection is going on; it would then be thrown back again into these glowing crucibles of a new creation, attracted by a new powerful centre, and followed by other accumulations of cosmic dust, arriving at the same point from different quarters of the heavens, it would finally form itself into a new focus of incandescence, and produce a starting point for a new creation.

The mathematician and physiologist, Helmholtz, admitting in his criticism of the theory of Kant and Laplace that the nebulous matter of which the solar system consists is of extreme tenuity or fineness, has determined the quantity of heat which must have been generated by the condensation to which we owe the existence of the sun and the whole planetary system. Taking the specific heat of water as the basis for the condensing mass, the elevation of temperature produced by the mechanical formation of the sun would have reached twenty-eight million degrees. The ulterior condensation of the cosmic dust disseminated through space would then by itself have been amply sufficient for the creation of new worlds.

We may, therefore, be finally assured that nature holds in reserve causes of resurrection, as it held in its hands causes of destruction. For her time is nothing. An act which requires a hundred thousand years for its accomplishment is brought to its final issue with precisely the same ease as another act requiring only one minute's time. Speaking in absolute terms, eternity alone exists, and what we call time is only a relative form of human thought. With respect to our human personalities and their immortality or resurrection, it is of importance to make here a distinction between matter and spirit. Each constituent atom of our body is indestructible, and travels constantly from one incorporation to another. We are logically forced to admit that our actual or virtual force, our psychic monad, our individual *ego*, or *I*, is equally indestructible. But under what conditions does it exist? Under what forms does it become reincarnated? What were we before our birth, and what shall we be after our death? Astronomy gives us a first answer—an answer worthy of nature's majesty, and in intimate correspondence with our innate sentiments. But this answer can be nothing else but the corollary of a psychological solution. Let the philosophers imitate the astronomers. Let them work upon facts instead of speculating upon words, and one day the veil of Isis will be completely lifted for our souls which are so legitimately affected by the truth. Positive science, science alone, will answer: Life is universal and eternal.

Benalla, 11th May, 1882.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVIEW.

We are pleased to note the progress of this excellent journal both in size and interest, the April number now before us containing 80 pages, of admirable matter. Following a well selected series of notes, comments, and review of contemporary spiritual opinion, is the continuation of the interesting "Personal Reminiscences of Epes Sargent," referred to in a former notice; next we have an examination of the "Realistic Assumptions of Modern Science," by Frank Podmore, B.A., dealing more particularly with the theories of Huxley, Clifford, and Herbert, his text being taken from the latter's book of which the article is to some extent, a review. This article is to be continued, and seems tending towards a more general analysis of Professor Herbert's position.

"A series of Authentic Narratives" with an introduction by M.A. (Oxon.) are commenced under the heading of "Ghostly Visitors." They comprise records of ap-

paritions, visions, and premonitions, intelligible and natural to the Spiritualist, but deemed supernatural by the generality of mankind.

Mrs. De Morgan, authoress of "From Matter to Spirit," contributes to this number the first part of an article on the "Psychology of Gall," which appears so far, endorsing of his theory and principles of phrenology.

The tone and quality of this journal should commend it to the thoughtful and intellectual students of Spiritualism and Psychology.

"L' ASTRONOMIE."

A MONTHLY REVIEW OF POPULAR ASTRONOMY, EDITED BY
M. CAMILLE FLAMMARION.

WITH the daily increasing spread of the education of the masses a growing demand has, within the last few years, arisen for popular treatises on the various branches of science. The dogmatic religion of the day has long since ceased to furnish food for reflection or intellectual occupation to the more enlightened multitude. Theological discussions, disputations, or wranglings and quarrellings over theological-metaphysical themes, have long ago lost their charm of novelty and attraction in the eyes of the people; dogmas about immaculate conceptions or infallible vicars of Christ, have no further interest for a generation which has at last come to its senses; and consequently, popularised science, dealing with reliable facts, and leading to practical and useful results, engrosses now the attention of a large proportion of the better educated and more intelligent classes of readers all over Europe and America. Calculating upon the progress of this recent development of the modern mind in the direction of the acquirement of positive knowledge, and knowing, moreover, that of the whole series of sciences astronomy has always commanded most attention, M. Camille Flammarion, at once the most distinguished astronomer of France and the most advanced scientific Spiritualist—the Crookes of the French nation—has undertaken to publish a monthly periodical of the doings of astronomy and of the most recent researches and discoveries in the department of celestial and terrestrial physics. In this his most laudable undertaking he is aided by the best talent of the whole world, and the most distinguished astronomers of England, France, Germany, Italy, and America, are collaborators in the great work of the world-renowned French savant.

The first number of *Astronomie* appeared on the first of March, 1882, this month being specially selected for the issue of this paper, as it represents the old and true beginning of the year, the month of January having been adopted for the beginning of the new year only a few centuries ago by the nations of Europe. It is superbly got up, printed on the best paper, illustrated with beautifully executed wood cuts, astronomical maps and diagrams, and what is of the utmost importance for the success of this expensive enterprise, written in a most charming popular style without descending to the level of elementary teaching.

This periodical of astronomical science may be read with equal profit by the trained amateur astronomer and by the eager student of general popular science, and it treats in an exhaustive manner of the latest conquests in the knowledge of things celestial. To give the reader an idea of the vast extent of scientific research over which this monthly review of Astronomy is going to spread, we have only to mention that in its pages will be answered questions such as these: What are those flames 100,000 miles high which spectrum analysis has discovered on the surface of the sun?

—What is the nature of those changes which have recently come over our satellite, the moon?—What are those companions of Mars whose diameters do not exceed the dimensions of Paris, and which have been recently discovered at a distance of 15,000,000 miles from our earth?—In what state or condition are the inhabitants of Mars with respect to meteorology and climatology?—What about that "red spot," as large as our earth, which we have now observed on Jupiter for the

last three years?—Do the rings of Saturn approach one another, and will they disappear in the course of time?—What is the transparent tail of the comets made of?—Are the falling stars remnants of broken-up comets?—Will the showers of meteors one of these days rain down upon the earth some vestiges of extra-terrestrial life? These and many more equally interesting subjects will form the contents of this valuable monthly publication.

The number now lying before us contains the following ably written articles, into the details of which only want of space prevents us from entering:—1. The Observatory of Paris, with two illustrations. 2. The Comets, with a sketch of the course of the great comet of 1881 from June till September. 3. Lunar Landscapes, with a photographic illustration of Archimedes and Aristillus. 4. Under the heading of Academy of Sciences, short communications on Astronomical and Physical Subjects. 5. Scientific News and Varieties. 6. The Aspect of the Heavens in March, 1882, &c., &c. Such a bill of fare ought to attract the attention of a large circle of readers in all parts of the world; and we have no doubt that the labours of our fellow Spiritualist and astronomer, with his own vast acquirements, and assisted by the best scientific intellect of the world, will be crowned with the same success as all his other extensive scientific publications, amounting to some 26 vols., have well earned and richly deserved, during the last twenty years of the laborious life of this equally bold and sound speculator and searcher of the secrets of heaven—nay, of the secrets of two heavens—a heaven physical and a heaven spiritual. *Au revoir!*

C. W. R.

LYCEUM BUILDING FUND.

MR. WALKER gave a reading at the Masonic Hall, on Monday, May 8th, in aid of the above fund, his selection being the beautiful poem, "Justinian," by Buchanan, which appeared in the "Contemporary Review" about two years since. It was read with skill and pathos, and listened to with deep attention. At its conclusion, the members of the Lyceum and subscribers to the fund held a meeting to receive the resignation of the originator of the fund, Mr. C. Johnston, and his colleagues, Messrs. Hall and Cherry. The motion for its acceptance was coupled with the hearty thanks of the Lyceum to those gentlemen for the work so far done, which in four months had resulted in the collection of upwards of fifty pounds.

Messrs. Johnston and Terry being elected trustees, suggestions were invited as to the best means of augmenting the fund and hastening the building of a Hall. Amongst other suggestions it was proposed to form a Joint Stock Company, with an issue of two or three thousand shares. Mr. Walker said that the success of this would depend upon the basis and intended application of the fund. If it were intended for Lyceum purposes only, people did not take a sufficiently active interest in the education of the young to make it a success; but if it were made a Freethought Hall in addition to a Lyceum, there would be no difficulty in getting a sufficient number of subscribers.

Mr. Terry being invited to express his views on the subject, intimated that they were of a very decided character. The Lyceum was Spiritualistic in its conception—Andrew Jackson Davis, the founder of the first Lyceum, professedly obtaining the system from the spirit-world, where he in trance or vision saw it in operation. Numerous spiritual Lyceums had sprung up from that time. There was one Freethought Lyceum in Dunedin, and he (Mr. T.) had found it necessary to correct the statement that it was a Freethought invention. The Melbourne Progressive Lyceum was a Spiritualistic institution, and as long as he had anything to do with it he should do his best to keep it as such. His reason was that experience had taught him that Spiritualists and Freethinkers (so called) could not amalgamate. The Rational Spiritualist was a Freethinker—could go with non-spiritualistic Freethinkers, as far as they went, and farther; but the Materialistic Freethinker was, as

a rule, more bigoted and prejudiced against the Spiritualist than the orthodox Christian. He had fairly tried the amalgamation of the two parties in the Spiritualistic and Freethought Association of which he was the first President, and although he worked conscientiously for its success, it had speedily disintegrated. In answer to some comments of Mr. Walker as to the narrowing down of the scope to simple Spiritualism, which were taken exception to by Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Terry said that the harmonious basis of the Lyceum and the Spiritualism it comprehended included all who believed in a God and a future state of existence; it excluded only Materialists. Materialists and non-spiritualistic Freethinkers could start Lyceums of their own. We could work side by side with them, and in harmony, but could not fuse. This basis being distinctly understood and accepted, the following officers were elected to carry forward the fund: Secretary, Mr. G. R. Cherry; Treasurer, Mr. J. Vevers. Committee: Messrs. Cunningham, Williams, Lees, and Codling, with power to add to their number.

The meeting then adjourned.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

THE DEATH PENALTY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—While briefly noticing a few points in the letter of your correspondent "Impartial," I will leave to your more experienced and able pen the task of replying in full to the objections raised by him to the abolition of the death penalty.

In the first place then, the spirits with whom I speak teach me that all *punishments* ought to cease, and restraint, accompanied by efforts to refine and reform, be substituted for them. If this course were followed the restraint, or imprisonment, would not be "more cruel" than hanging, and the murderer would not be so likely to "remain impenitent," "brood over his condition," or "plan schemes of revenge." The introduction by "Impartial" of the money cost to society, where human life is at stake, is, to my mind, an argument unworthy of one who "accepts the spiritual philosophy." The argument that the death penalty has a deterrent effect is, I think, fairly met in the letter of your correspondent "Reform." I am not sufficiently acquainted with the writings of A. J. Davis, or Maria M. King to know whether the extracts cited by "Impartial" have been in any way qualified by those authors. If they have not, I can only say that my experience has not led me to their conclusions; and I will here in the interest of truth, make the admission that I have been in the past greatly, and am still occasionally much annoyed by the temptations, suggestions, and objectionable language of a decidedly ill-disposed Spirit. Consequently I conclude that all other ill-disposed spirits have occasionally opportunities, of which they avail themselves, to tempt and injure those in this life. "Impartial," referring to the spirit-world, says:—"The theory of yourself and 'C. R.' gives us a world of chaos and anarchy." Now, Sir, if vice and error exist here why may they not be part of the condition of existence which follows death? It must be remembered that the condition immediately following death is not a final one; it is only, so to speak, another stage on a very long journey, which may ultimately lead to the perfect conditions of existence looked for by "Impartial" and all good men.

The proposition contained in the postscript is a strange one, and if carried to its legitimate issue would, it appears to me, warrant the immediate destruction of the whole race.

Yours etc.,

C. R.

2nd May, 1882.

THE DEATH PENALTY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—The principal reason why there should be no capital punishment, or Death Penalty has as yet scarcely been touched upon. Earth-life must be for a certain purpose! I am impressed to say that earth-life is for the express purpose of developing a conscious individuality, a *Spirit*, and for that Spirit to develop and to collect everlasting treasures, in fact, a spiritual capital for himself, which enables him to live on under happy and favourable conditions, after the death of the physical body. This capital consists of thoughts, actions, motives and knowledge, the quality of which determines the relative gravity of the spirit, and the same law by which water finds its own level, also gravitates each spirit to its proper position, a spirit much laden with impurities or sin is actually material and too heavy to rise from the surface of the earth, and by sympathy is attracted to kindred spirits in or out of the flesh; like and like only associate.

As it is next to impossible for a free criminal, or I should rather say a poor undeveloped brother to reform, so it is with such spirits, they live in an evil atmosphere of vast dimensions, no opportunity of perceiving good, their minds so formed in the one groove of evil, that to comprehend purity is next to impossible, hence it is easy to suppose that it takes many hundreds, and even thousands of years, before the teachings of a better class of spirits can reach the intellect of those unfortunates. How cruel then to launch a poor misguided brother out of this earth-school into spirit-life before his time, (unprepared) to such a future.

The supposed right to take human life for punishment is an assumed impertinence on the part of society.

Let the poor criminal be confined, give him work according to his ability and liking, do not make a slave of him, it would not take much work to pay his maintenance, above all, teach him not the cold incomprehensible Christian dogmas, but Christ's principles; bring the difference of good and evil, the purpose of earth-life, the conditions under which life goes on after physical death, so forcibly to his mind that it becomes conviction, and he will become a useful and a happy being, even before death.

No doubt there would be some such, but let us look on the worst case, the other extreme, one that does not reform, and remains, to all appearance, quite unregenerate; the constant teaching, the better example, all surrounding impressions are nevertheless retained in his mind and form a small capital, which will greatly assist him to progress in spirit-life. We have also all the different stages of development during confinement between the two extremes, the good affected by such a course would be incalculable. *Re expense* I should think such establishments could be made self-supporting.

No doubt the criminal does emanate a malefic influence which is very dangerous, while at large, but confined in such an establishment with keepers of strong moral character, the evil influence has no effect.

CARL H. HARTMANN,

Toowoomba, Queensland.

The *Banner of Light* has just entered upon its fiftieth volume, and twenty-sixth year of existence. In reviewing its past career, and that of the Movement to which it is devoted, it says:—"Spiritualism, like the other great world-truths which have preceded it in the order of time, has gained by being cut back to the original plant, like a hedge; that it may grow denser, and show a more living green, and be of a larger and better service, and endure for a longer time. Such is the law of growth, in all things at least that are associated with the human. The gourd runs to the roof in a single night, while the oak strews its acorns on the soft sward below for a century or more. This cutting-down process, we sincerely believe, is for the single purpose of forcing Modern Spiritualism to keep its life close to the phenomenal facts, those few and simple things which carry in themselves the perfect demonstration of immortality, and which are not to be discarded."

MISSTATEMENTS.

"ANNA'S" ACCURACY ANALYSED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—I beg to avail myself of your kind permission to make a brief response in acknowledgment of my fair critic's curious comments upon an article of mine which you published in your issue for April.

I.—THE INCARNATION. "Anna's" arguments on this head need not detain us long.

(1) The lady does not show how theologians have answered Anselm's query. With what unison many of them have done so, is fairly indicated in the Rev. Mr. Strong's essay to which, in my article, I referred.

(2) Mr. Joseph Cook and his methods may safely be left until he comes amongst us in *propria persona*, when doubtless both he and they will be suitably attended to. How he succeeds in making the Incarnation "comport" with science, is shown in Dr. Rohner's contribution to the "Harbinger" for April.*

II.—THE TRINITY. "Anna" seems to contend that in the Oriental theologies there is no mention of a divine Trinity.

(1) She refers us to Bishop Moorhouse's "Expectation of the Christ," and Archdeacon Hardwick's "Christ and Other Masters." Those works are before me, but they do not support "Anna" in her denial. These are Hardwick's words (p. 192), and Dr. Moorhouse quotes them with approval (p. 32):—"The Trimurti of India has no foundation in the Vedas, nor have any traces of it been discovered in the laws of Manu. It was clearly the production of a later age." I am not concerned with Mr. Hardwick's chronology. I am content to italicise those portions of his statement which concede that Hindu theology contains a Trinity.

(2) Lest the foregoing should seem insufficient to attest the existence of Triads in Oriental theologies, I will select from a host of authorities three whose qualifications and veracity "Anna" will not venture to impugn:—

(a.) The Rev. Thomas Maurice, B.A., at one time Assistant-librarian to the British Museum, writes "From the remotest eras the Indian nations have adored a triune deity." (*Indian Antiquities*, vol. iv., p. 739.)

(b.) The Rev. G. S. Faber, M.A., B.D., Prebendary of Salisbury, expatiates at some length upon what he calls "the famous Triad of Hindoo theology." (*Origin of Pagan Idolatry*, p. 118.)

(c.) J. S. Stuart-Glennie, M.A., Barrister-at-law, writes "In ancient Osirianism, as in modern Christianity, the Godhead is conceived as a Trinity." (*In the Morning-Land*, p. 370.) †

III.—RAHAB. "Anna" says it is either "imagination" or "ignorance" to assert that Jesus was descended from Rahab.

(1) If the lady will turn to Matthew's genealogy of Christ, she will find (chapter i, verse 5) the name of Rahab—there spelt "Rachab."

(2) In a very orthodox work, published by the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," London, and entitled "A Help to Reading the Bible," by the Rev. B. E. Nicholls, M.A., it is stated that "Through Rahab's faith salvation came, not only to her, but to her house; she became a wife and mother in Israel; and from her descended David and Christ—from her who had been a harlot, who was a gentile, and of the accursed race of Canaan," (p. 223).

IV.—DAVID. My fair critic objects to my estimate of "the sweet singer," and thinks it "almost scandalous."

(1) But "Anna" admits that David "erred grievously," that "he was severely punished," that he

"deeply repented," and that the Bible "sternly reproves" his misdeeds! Is not that giving up the whole case?

(2.) But *was* David punished so very "severely"? We read (1 Chronicles, xxix, 28.) "And David died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead."

(3.) Was David so "deeply" repentant? Certainly he "fasted and wept" while "the Lord" made sick unto death, his illegitimate child; but when the child died, David quickly recovered, as the latter verses of 11 Samuel, xii., clearly show. It is evident that "sweet" David didn't become a victim to remorse, or he would scarcely have exclaimed with such self-complacency,—"The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness: according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me. For I have kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God. For all his judgments were before me, and as for his statutes, I did not depart from them," etc., (11 Samuel, xii., 21, etc.) Neither was his penitence very sincere, seeing that on his death-bed (1 Kings, ii.) he implored vengeance upon two aged men, the life of at least one of whom he had previously sworn to spare, (11 Samuel, xix, 23).

(4.) Does the Bible so "sternly reprove" David? Where? Scarcely in 1. Samuel, xiii, 14, where it alludes to him as "a man after God's own heart." Scarcely in 1. Kings, xv, 3-5, where it says his heart was "perfect with the Lord his God," and that he "did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from anything that He commanded him, all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite!"

(5.) As to the Psalms said to be David's, while many are undoubtedly excellent and wise, some are quite otherwise—the 109th., for instance, being atrocious.

I am, etc.,

X.

8th May, 1882.

HINTS ON ESOTERIC THEOSOPHY.

We are in receipt of a substantial pamphlet, of 108 pages, bearing the above title and issued under the authority of the Theosophical Society, its object evidently being to clear away some of the mystery which enshrouds the Indian adepts, whose very existence is largely doubted even by members of the Society. The larger portion of the book consists of a letter from an ex-member to a friend and former colleague in the Society in which he gives his reasons for leaving it, and for disbelieving in the existence of the Occult Brotherhood, and an exhaustive reply in which his friend ably and logically traverses all the objections as to the probabilities of their existence, and supports his argument by the personal experience of phenomena legitimately attributable to them, though even he has not personally seen one of them. This, however, is supplemented by letters from Col. Olcott and several other witnesses of repute, who have seen more than one of the brothers, and witnessed some of the marvellous phenomena attributed to them; amongst the latter we find one from the Hon. J. S.—, whose name and titles are given in full. He is the writer of the letter on "Occult Phenomena," which appears in the present issue of this paper. The testimony, both as regards the objective existence of at least two of the brethren, and also as to direct writing and marvellous rapid transition of the same, is clear and decisive. There is among the letters a portion of one from Madame Blavatsky that does not appear pertinent to the subject, and might in our opinion have been with advantage omitted, not because it is antagonistic to the spiritual theory, but because it is inaccurate in its premises, if not in its conclusions. It is the groundwork of that portion of Madame B.'s early mediumistic experiences which is given in the last portion of "Fragments of Occult Truth," and materially weakens the analogy there attempted by giving a clear psychometric basis for the phenomena referred to, and by attributing the pseudo mediumship to her weak and sickly physical condition—a state the very antithesis of that of the medium she speaks so contemptuously of.

* See also "Joseph Cook: A Critique," by Dr. Lewis and Professor Fiske, M.A.

† "Anna" would do well to consult also, Bonwick's "Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought," pp. 396-401; and Lillie's "Buddha and Early Buddhism," chapter ii.

CAN IT BE?

A STORY OF THE DAY.

By E. CYRIL HAVILAND.

(Continued.)

CHAPTER VIII.

Of course we were all anxious for Saturday afternoon to arrive and I was busy preparing, so far as I could get information.

One spirit through my wife told me to get some true frankincense gum and burn it during the time of operation, and another one through Jamieson, instructed me to have a bright violet screen fixed for the medium to sit near, and which screen was to be in focus on the plate, whilst a third described a reflector to be made of sheets of tin to reflect the light diagonally across the screen.

All these things then I was busy preparing, and when Saturday arrived, and with it, my friends as appointed, I explained to them the various articles as I arranged them.

The first to sit was Mrs. Bronton, of course all the others were in the room, but she was first to sit in the chair in front of the screen, but without success. There was not a shadow of a spirit or in fact anything beyond the ordinary photograph. Then I tried all the others, from Jack Bronton down to Kingsbury, but failed in all. Of course I could not give a reason. I knew something was amiss, the atmosphere, or the aura of those present.

"Ah," said Kingsbury, "I thought so, somebody has been playing you a trick. That plate with Miss Bronton's picture on it must have been exposed before."

It was in vain my attempting to prove, such could not have been the case.

"Don't you think Tom," said Jack Bronton, "that you might have taken a photograph of Lily at some time and forgotten to develop it and then accidentally re-exposed it?"

"No," I replied, "impossible. I brought a new dozen of plates that morning and these were the plates I used."

It had become too dark by this time to take any more, and so I reluctantly put away the camera and we went out into the twilight of the sunset and walked about the garden. My thoughts were still on the failures of the day, but I said I would try with the original sitters alone some day through the week, and Wednesday afternoon was agreed upon. Mary and Joe Kingsbury were not walking with us, although they came out of the house in one group.

"Do you know where Mary is, Ruth," I ask my wife.

"With Joseph Kingsbury, Tom," she replies with a twinkle as of one who would convey more than the words.

"Yes, but where is Joe?"

"With Mary, Tom," says Ruth in the same style, this time pinching my arm.

So no more is said on that subject and Bronton turns again to Spiritualism.

"I always looked upon you as an atheist Tom, until the other day, when you told me that Spiritualists did believe in God," said he.

"Of course they do," I reply, "for you see they believe in Spirits and so they believe in a Supreme Spirit and Ruler of the Universe."

"But what about all these exposures, that we see in the papers constantly. Now the other day, I read in the *Herald* that a great medium in America had been seized whilst personating a spirit, and constantly I see similar things in the press, but never to my recollection have I read of an authentic case."

"Exactly so Jack, and until the press becomes really truthful, you never will see an authentic case. Why, I have written to the *Herald* myself and sent them sworn declarations, but they would not publish anything in favour of it. But look here Jack, if you want good reliable information; I can lend you papers by the dozen, there's the *Harbinger of Light*, published in Melbourne, the *Banner of Light*, and *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, of America, the *Spiritualist*, and *Medium*, and *Daybreak*, of London. All these are good reliable papers, and I can lend you any of them you like to-night."

"Well, I won't take any yet awhile, but when I am less busy, I shall be glad to borrow some. But you know, I can hardly believe that these things are possible, although I must admit Tom, that you did tell me of Lily's death and this photograph of her is wonderful, I must say, but I think it will all admit of some simpler explanation. But now Tom, perhaps I have been wronging you all along, as I did in calling you an atheist; tell me, do you believe in the divinity of Christ?"

"No, Jack I do not. Jesus Christ is looked upon by various classes of Spiritualists in different ways. He is a good medium some say, while others are doubtful as to his existence; for my own part, I believe he existed and that he was really a very high-class medium."

"But, Tom, why do you not allow he was divine, that is a Son of God," urged Jack.

"I allow he was a Son of God, just as we all are, for you know Jack, he said himself 'My Father and your Father, my God and your God,' or at least words to that effect have been published by those who wrote the Gospels, and you know these Gospels were not written for years and years after Christ's death."

"Yes, but look at the prophecies that he fulfilled. You should read Paley's 'Evidences of Christianity,' Tom, but of course you never read any work against Spiritualism."

"I do Jack, I read all I can, but the fact is, everybody I meet, proposes some different book, and my life would have to be devoted to nothing else, but reading if I were to follow everyone's advice on this point. But Jack, Christ may have fulfilled all the prophecies, or his writers may have stated that he did, or the prophecies may have been written to fit his case, but that is really not a question of Spiritualism. That question comes into the domain of Free thought."

"Go on, Jack," says Mrs. Bronton, "we are the audience; go on Mr. Hawk, we'll see fair play, won't we, Ruth?"

"Ah, here come, Mary and Joe," says Ruth. "Where have you two been, eh?"

"Only to see Miss Langton's rabbits," Joe replies, "Miss Langton wanted me to doctor one that was sick."

"A bad excuse," says Mrs. Bronton, "is better than no excuse at all."

Just then Ruth who had Mary on the other side of her, came and put her arm through mine and whispering in my ear the simple words "Mrs. Joe," drew my attention to a diamond and ruby ring on Mary's finger.

Mary drew her hand away and ran into the house out of sight, and just then as the bell announced tea-time we followed her.

"I would like to argue that out with you, Tom, sometime," said Jack.

"So you shall Jack, we will tackle it some evening. I took an opportunity then of getting beside Joe, to ask him about those rabbits too."

"You think you have arranged those rabbits alright, I suppose Joe."

"Oh yes, Tom, they will be alright now."

"And will Mary be all right too, do you think Joe?" I whisper aside.

"What do you mean Tom?"

"Why, she found a diamond ring, down there, didn't she?"

"Oh yes, that's alright, I did not think you noticed it so quickly, but I was going to see you about it to-night, Tom."

"I am glad of it Joe and I wish you happiness."

"Don't say anything of it, before Brontons, Tom, for awhile."

"All right Joe."

Then we go in, and again that woman's intuition makes Ruth seat Mary and Joe together.

Well, all this seems beside the purpose of this story altogether, and I must really apologise to my readers, but the fact had to be recorded how Mary and Joe became engaged and beside that, I trust the lady readers of my story will say that "they would not care for it all, if it had not been some love in it."

So then, Old Father Time grew older, and Wednesday came and again I find a record in my diary of no success, and I was beginning to feel very disappointed, but I had

still a hope and that was, that Koorawani had promised to be photographed through Jamieson some day, but he would not fix the time, saying that he would let me know a few days beforehand.

In my diary I find a week after this Wednesday's failure that we started our regular weekly seances which had been mooted some time before, and our regular sitters were my wife, Mary Langton, Joe Kingsbury and myself. Jack Branton did not care about joining in it.

I cannot here give a detail of each sitting that we have had, but after two or three weeks we began to get Spirit-lights in the dark. Ruth had been a trance-speaker before we commenced and so we had the advantage of directions from her what to do and what arrangements to make in the position of the sitters.

I have here a shorthand record of a trance-oratorion given through her by a Spirit who had passed over, not long before our sitting, and as it contains some truths on Spiritualism, I will transcribe it to these pages.

We had been sitting as usual and Kingsbury had asked several questions on the general subject and had remarked that it seemed to be spreading very much in the colonies, when suddenly Ruth was taken possession of by this spirit. He would not give his name, saying he did not care to do so, and he did not like to see Spirits with big names run after as they were, as it only led to impersonation.

"Would you kindly tell us," said Joe, "what do you do in this Spiritland. Do you work?"

"There is no idleness in God's universe, my friend, here we have our work as well as you have yours. We impress you with ideas and plans for reformation and we look after your sick more than you think, besides our own Spiritual work here."

"This Spiritualistic movement seems to spread very rapidly," said Joe.

"It has spread, but not so rapidly as we Spirits could wish, but I was a Spiritualist on your earth and so I found myself much advanced when I came here, and now if you like I will give you a few remarks on the subject."

Of course we agreed and I now insert the oration in question.

"Spiritualism," said the Spirit "has made rapid strides in these colonies without doubt. Every day one hears of new circles and more startling phenomena, and every day brings forward more theories from non-Spiritualists to account for the same. Mind-reading, will-power, unconscious cerebration, nerve-power, animal-magnetism, all are hurled against the Spiritualistic theory and all fall before it, for none of them meet the requirements, and none of them explain satisfactorily the why and wherefore of the phenomena. The question to be decided is this. Are the phenomena known generally as Spiritualistic, caused by the Spirits of beings who once lived as we now live on this earth?"

To answer this we must glance at the phenomena as they are presented to us from the lowest form of table tilting to the highest, that of materialisation, and from the basest lies that are told, to the strictest truth.

I am premising that any sensible man will admit that these things actually take place under strict test conditions, and I am treating the question purely as a scientific one.

For example then:—a circle of friends all seriously and earnestly investigating are sitting, and the table actually tilts and answers questions intelligently,—I do not want to argue whether the tilting is puerile or not, for I hold that whatever happens outside an accepted or generally accepted law cannot be trivial or puerile to a truly scientific mind,—therefore this table answers these questions and the friends sitting are well astonished. They know they did not do it and they further know that some of these questions cannot be answered by anyone present. They find, that the unseen power states it is the Spirit of John Brown and that he died on such a day at a certain place and this is eventually proved to be true although no one present knew it.

This is no exceptional case but on the contrary is one of common occurrence, and the question asked is—can that be really the spirit of John Brown who gave the information?

We pass over the phenomena comprising trance and inspirational speaking, and for sake of argument, will notice that class which is beyond human trickery such as Professor Zollner's experiments with Slade. There we have knots tied in an endless cord; solid rings of wood passed off an endless string and put on the solid leg of a table, the top and bottom immovable and larger than the rings; writing on a sealed slate, inaccessible to mortal power; the impression of a foot on a slate under test conditions and many other phenomena quite as much beyond human power under the same conditions.

The question here is. Are these things produced by the medium, by will-power, etc., or are they produced by an outside influence? Professor Zollner states that he expressly willed and used all his thoughts to obtain the two solid wooden rings interlinked, but what did happen was never in his wish nor in his thoughts. This then is against the first and in favour of the latter theory, and I think that the whole series of experiments,—for one must really to judge faithfully, take in the whole range—show that it is the work of an outside influence, independent and in some cases in opposition to the medium and the sitters.

Glancing through all the experiments I have read, or know of personally, for as a Spirit I have been invisibly present at many seances, from Professor Hare's, where two platinum balls were passed into a sealed glass tube in the year 1858, to the photograph of Miss Branton's Spirit obtained by my friend here, a few weeks ago. The whole evidence points to an outside influence at work and the point remains to identify that influence with the Spirits of our departed friends.

This appears to be an easy matter, but is really not so, for we must remember that we have a remarkably subtle influence to deal with and one that having been proved capable of doing the most wonderful things on record, is therefore quite as capable of personating a Spirit form, even as in the materialised state.

Still, as far as human reasoning power is concerned I think we are quite justified in accepting the matter as proved, and to this end the particular phenomena of Spirit-photography and materialisation are conclusive proof. Take for instance, the first of these two, Spirit-photography. Here you have a substantial proof as in the case of Lily Branton's Spirit, where friends can identify the Spirit, as the person they knew. So that I look upon this particular phenomenon as an excellent one to hold by.

Then, we have materialisation of Spirit-forms. Without more than alluding to the excellent apparatus and tests of Mr. Charles Blackburn and the various other records of this phase of Spiritualism I would point out that the mass of evidence published on this one subject alone would fill volumes.

So that I think you have it clearly in our favour, that the Spirits of those who lived here, do communicate with you.

Why then do you receive such lies? There is no disguising the fact that you are told lies innumerable, and one reason is you are not careful enough of your sitters and so many of the lower class of Spirits are permitted to come. As a rule people sit for the amusement it affords, and forget that they are playing with edged tools. Many circles, in fact the majority of circles are content with table tilting and table rapping from one year's end to another; there is no progression, no advancement sought and a Spirit of a lower class comes to the circle and finds he is treated with more respect and looked up to far more if he assumes a big name and so he calls himself King Richard III., and throws the tables and furniture about as he likes. Then again people are so fond of lying and deceit on your world that it is no wonder that the next place of existence is populated with liars. This is another proof then of identity and I must say, a very strong one.

I would say to my fellow Spiritualists who are still in earth-life, try to be truthful, serious and progressive in search of wisdom and if you find a lying Spirit among your invisible friends, do not encourage him, but show him he is not wanted, for by this means only we shall get truth. Aim, also, at something higher than table-

rapping, use to the best of your ability the gifts you have and be thankful to the All Wise Spirit for them.
 "And now, my friends, I will say good night and I thank you very much for listening to me so patiently."
 "Goodnight" we replied "and we thank you very much for your visit." Ruth then gave a sigh and recovered her consciousness and our circle for that evening broke up.

(To be continued.)

NECESSITY AND FREE-WILL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—As I am always ready to give a reason for the knowledge that is in me, I have to thank your correspondent, signing himself "True Blue," in your last issue, for affording me an opportunity of stating the grounds on which my opinion in favour of man's freewill is based. I do not feel at all deterred from vindicating my opinion on the subject from the long array of scientific authorities against it which your correspondent has cited, any more than I do on account of its harmonising to a certain extent with the views held by those superstitionists whom he has mentioned as supporting it. Those who are a law unto themselves hold that authority bears no relation to truth when not borne out by experience or endorsed by reason. I am not ignorant of the many ingenious arguments that have been adduced to prove the theory of necessity, based on the fact that every effect has its antecedent cause. I maintain, however, that although man does not possess absolute freewill, he possesses conditional freewill, *i. e.*, freewill within the bounds of nature's laws. He has not the power to alter the natural law of effect following cause, but I hold he possesses the power to so vary many of the causes as to produce a different effect to that which otherwise would have occurred, in the same way as he is able to change the condition of matter although he cannot annihilate it; and this power, limited though it may be, constitutes him a free agent, and God-like in a finite degree.

That man, to a certain extent, is "a creature of circumstances," and that the general outline of his life is in a great measure governed by pre-natal influences, his education, and his surroundings, I fully admit; but I maintain that the action of his will also exercises a very potent influence on his life, and is the chief factor in filling in the details thereof. From a purely philosophic point of view, the theory of absolute necessity may appear conclusive; but that it is an incomplete theory is evident from its not being in accord with practical experience, for it is the negation of all moral obligation. The doctrine of freewill comprises the greatest of moral issues. If it is false, and absolute necessity reigns supreme, the voice of conscience in man must be a gross delusion and his moral responsibility a solemn farce; without freewill moral obligation is an absurdity. Spencer declares that the real proposition involved in the doctrine of freewill is that every one is at liberty to desire or not to desire; but with this I cannot agree. I hold with Kant and Sir William Hamilton, that we must desire, but that our will can restrain desire, and that the action of man's will being incalculable, which even Spencer does not deny, is incontrovertible proof that the theory of necessity is, to say the least, faulty.

If, as your correspondent seems to believe, there exists an absolute law of necessity in regard to man's every action, given the motives which are present to an individual mind, and the character and disposition of that individual, we should be able to calculate with mathematical precision what will occur to him in the future, in the same way as chemists are able to tell what will be the results of various chemical combinations, and as astronomers are able to calculate to a second the time in which eclipses will take place. Until your correspondent, or some one else, demonstrates that this is possible, I shall retain the opinion that man possesses conditional freewill, however "unique" my position as a Freethinker in this respect may appear to be. A Necessarian cannot reasonably be a Freethinker in the literal sense, for he virtually denies the freedom of his

will to think or act; in other words, he is a Fatalist or one who believes that his will-power cannot in any way affect his thoughts or actions both of these being predetermined.

The late John Stuart Mill maintains the theory that the will is not determined, like other phenomena, by antecedents, but determines itself; that our volitions are not, properly speaking, the effect of causes, or at least have no causes which they uniformly obey, is in many points defensible. He holds that the doctrine of man's freewill is not inconsistent with the general theory of necessity. At page 493 of his "System of Logic," he writes: "The application of so improper a term as Necessity to the doctrine of cause and effect in the matter of human character, seems to me one of the most signal instances in philosophy of the abuse of terms, and its practical consequences one of the most striking examples of the power of language over our associations. The subject will never be generally understood until that objectionable term is dropped. The freewill doctrine, by keeping in view precisely that portion of the truth which the word Necessity puts out of sight, namely the power of the mind to co-operate in the formation of its own character, has given to its adherents a practical feeling much nearer to the truth than has generally (I believe) existed in the minds of Necessarians." To a certain extent man's will can vary the operations of those laws which affect him, for we have the power so to subordinate our desires to the sense of duty within that in time they become in accord with our moral nature.

If man does not possess freewill, why is he endowed with a conscience by which he is enabled to choose between right and wrong, and in consequence of which he is legally held responsible for his actions? Our judgments, doubtless vary on different subjects according to our schooling, but this does not alter the fact that we possess the power either to follow the dictates of our conscience or to give way to our desires, as unfortunately too many of us frequently do notwithstanding that we know that the effect is certain to follow the cause.

In my opinion the theory "that man's volitions are determined," is on a par with that metaphysical logic which professes to demonstrate that we do not actually exist, but merely imagine that we do so. This theory of Necessity is the basis on which the Calvinists found their absurd dogmas of foreknowledge, foreordination, election, and predestination. No man could accept such doctrine if he had ever felt that wrestling between duty and inclination which has been well termed the warring of the spirit with the flesh.

Take away conditional free-will from man, and he at once becomes an irresponsible machine, endowed with the useless faculty of intelligence and the still more useless authoritative conscience: nature, as far as man is concerned, becomes a complete failure, without an aim or purpose, and its Author a senseless myth.—Yours, &c.,

HUGH JUNIOR BROWNE.

INVESTIGATION OF SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

DEAR SIR,—You will be glad to hear that your publication of my letters to you in your columns, detailing my experiences, has not been without result in Rockhampton. Calling on a brother Spiritualist yesterday evening, he informed me to my great joy that there are many persons who are enquirers into Spiritualism in Rockhampton, and on my asking him whether my letters published in the *Harbinger of Light* had had anything to do with prompting this spirit of enquiry, he replied, "Yes, I believe so." I am glad of this, because if Spiritualism be investigated in the right, earnest, truthful, candid spirit which it justly deserves to receive, it cannot fail to carry conviction home to all the hearts of those who are earnest investigators that it is true, and that for long ages orthodoxy, so styled, has been guilty of deluding and bamboozing the people—its poor dupes—for centuries past with a false gospel of

fear, doubt, gloom, and despair, instead of gladdening their hearts with the glad tidings set forth, and exemplified by Jesus of Nazareth, of the Great Father Spirit's love, and of the true nature of the life hereafter; that it is not an eternal psalm-singing heaven on the one hand, nor an eternal ghastly hell of unutterable woe and hopeless despair on the other; but a life begun here on earth and continued in the spirit-world under changed conditions. A life of constant progression for all men and women, not of eternal stagnation, for who could be happy at all in the orthodox psalm-singing heaven, I should like to know? All this and more the enquirers will find out for themselves if only earnest, patient, and persevering truth-seekers. But I would most emphatically urge them all to be very careful to avoid scorning, ridiculing, or mocking the spirits, who are sent to teach them: then only is there danger to themselves. These beings will not be mocked without some mocking in return; and do not fear them, as too many foolishly do: they come to us to teach us greater things, that are unknown to mankind, than we have any idea of as yet; they come to lead us all onward and upward, both here and hereafter; to bid us rejoice in a life of progression, begun here, to be continued there; they come to take from us in mercy the fear of death, by showing that they themselves, the departed, are still alive, and as they are, we shall be also, when we come to join them in their bright and beautiful spirit-home in the land beyond the dark river. This is assuredly no matter for the ridicule or mockery of fools, but is worthy the attention of earnest philosophers and of all those who sadly go mourning for those departed friends of their own who have left this earth and sorrowing relatives behind them, by showing them the true state of the case, and bidding them not sorrow, for their beloved departed ones are still living and responsive still to the love of those whom they have left behind. The earnest enquirers will find indeed that "the angels are present with them when they think they are not near," "and that they are ready ever to whisper messages of hope and comfort to those they love." How beautiful is the spirit-message recorded in your last issue; how touching; how grandly it bears the stamp of Truth, this spirit's description of the spirit-world and of her own happy spirit-life! I have myself a marvellously beautiful description of the spirit-world and life, given to me by a spirit and recorded, which I intend to transcribe and send to you for publication in your columns shortly, and I can assure you it is beyond conception grand! Assuredly all this is not matter for scorning or ridicule. We should for ever strive so to live that where these spirits are we may be also. However, all must bear in mind the great truth that all human spirits are, both here and over yonder in the spirit-worlds, *just what they make themselves, and so they remain till they make themselves something else*; therefore, mockers beware—you know not what you do! If fools will persist in hating the truth, they do so at their own great and terrible peril; because they are defying God's law of progression for the whole human race—"Onward and upward for ever." There is the danger to all such stupid, mocking fools; there is the terrible risk they run!—I am, sir, yours, &c.,

UNITARIAN MINISTER.

Rockhampton, April 15th, 1882.

STRIVE AFTER PERFECTION.

(A Spiritual Communication—Received Impressively.)

As the sun sheds its magnetic rays on all, so on all are rays of magnetic love being shed from those who delight in bestowing. All are not equally receptive, however. Nevertheless, the fact remains. The blind man shut up in his hovel with its cobwebbed windows may say, and with truth, that for him there is no sun. So, too, many a one may declare that they feel not the Divine effluence of magnetic love, simply because the conditions are wanting to make them receptive. So far as it is possible it behoves one and all to strive to bring about those conditions; for why should any suffer

unnecessarily? There is no satisfaction in suffering, *per se*; it is only when it leads to the higher way that it is of any value. The fact of there being any pain is a proof of the want of perfection; for when the machine is in good order there is no grating from the attrition of any of its parts.

Strive after perfection, even though the hope to reach it here below be vain; the very fact of *striving* will bring happiness in no small measure. Never be satisfied with mediocrity. If the task be worth performing at all, let it be done satisfactorily. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," is excellent advice. Half-service, in any cause, is worthless—often dangerous. That which is performed in a perfunctory manner is never gratifying either to the receiver or the doer. Life might be twice as cheerful and happy as it is if this were borne in mind and acted upon. Throw your whole soul into your work, and for the time being, at least, troubles of whatever kind are forgotten, and are as though they were not: for *you* they have no existence whilst thus occupied. Carking care and weariness of the flesh may in this way lose half their power; and for the time being thou art happy, to say naught of the bright reflection that remains long after the fuel of the mind has been consumed. Yes, happy, thrice happy the man or woman who delights in work—mental or otherwise.

K.

Castlemaine.

SIGNOR OTTO HUG.

THE numerous friends of the above gentleman in this city will be glad to hear of his increasing success as a medical clairvoyant in New Zealand. The following account of his public mediumship is from the *Dunedin Morning Herald* of May 11th:—"It will be remembered that some time ago an account was published in these columns of Signor Otto Hug's treatment of patients, a report being given of his method of diagnosis by clairvoyance. Since then the doctor has had a very extensive practice, and has according to the testimony of numerous patients effected much good among the suffering humanity in the city. During his stay he has set one day apart for the treatment of poor patients gratuitously, and his kindness has been availed of to an enormous extent, so much so indeed that the doctor has now found himself obliged to curtail it to the most necessitous cases. A reporter of this paper was present yesterday for two hours, it being a free day, and saw a number of cases treated. The unanimity with which those who had made previous visits declared themselves improved in health was most noticeable, and the exuberance with which an Hibernian paralytic described his progressing recovery was refreshing to hear. After seeing a large number of old patients, Dr. Hug diagnosed several new cases, continuing, indeed, till he was exhausted, when several had to be sent away unattended to. The diagnosis was of the same nature as that previously described, and the absolute correctness with which every symptom of each case was detailed was marvellous; the doctor even told the original cause of the malady, such as a severe fright eight years ago giving a shock to the nervous system. How it is done the writer does not pretend to say, but there could be no question of the genuineness of the diagnosis. The difference in the looks of those who had been partly treated and those coming for the first time was most observable, the former looking much more cheerful than the latter. Several of the cases were hopelessly incurable, and these unfortunates were told that any treatment could be only palliative. Each patient, new or old, gave his or her name and address to the writer, but it is not necessary to publish them. A striking fact however was the large proportion who came from Caversham.

The *National Reformer* has opened its columns to a letter advocating Spiritualism, and giving some experiences, from the pen of Mr. Foster, of Preston, England, called forth by some depreciatory utterances of Mr. G. Atkinson (author of letters to Miss Martineau).

BISHOP MOORHOUSE ON HEALING.

"But the world's history could never have been what it is had here been no faculty whereby man's spiritual part was able to come into direct relation with the spiritual entity which underlies all phenomenal existence. It is the impossibility of denying this, without at the same time expunging a vast mass of the most positive evidence that has compelled religious orthodoxy to postulate 'MIRACLE'."

"Science denies miracle, but in order to preserve a show of consistency, 'IT EXFUNGES THE EVIDENCE.' Spiritualism, revivalism and all the phenomena generally of that class, represent a phase of the spiritual consciousness, the ineradicable aspirations of the soul of man towards its source.—EDWARD MAITLAND, "England and Islam," p. 132."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."

SIR,—I design a continuation of my letter in your last issue, rather than a second communication, and strictly in reply to those words of his lordship the Bishop of Melbourne, which I then quoted, and to which I now refer my readers.

I simply say that the truth of the Bishop's theory cannot consist with the most modern historical cases which I shall present, all of which shall come from authority as high as that of the Bishop.

I hold that any apparent and professed supermundane or spiritual operation working a cure, overturns the Bishop's theory; I, therefore, prefer to take my first facts, as in my last letter, not from Spiritualistic literature, where the mines are so rich, but from orthodox ecclesiastical literature, under the highest sanction, viz., a Roman Catholic dignity, who is a D.D. and V.G., as well as Provost of Northampton.

It has for me a homely sound about it, for that is close to my native place.

In opening his preface he writes as follows; I give first the title page:—"A Faithful Narrative of the Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, near Lourdes," by F. C. Husenbeth, D.D., V.G., and Provost of Northampton.

"If there ever were facts proved beyond dispute, they are those connected with the apparition of the Blessed Virgin in the Grotto of Lourdes; yet these marvellous events are even now hardly known in this country."

This latter part of the good Provost's intimation would account for the Bishop of Melbourne having hardly known of such things; but as of the miraculous cures at Knock, in Ireland, so I say of these in France, the similarity of detail must, to the reasoning mind, cause one narrative to give credit, not discredit, to the other. As this point of view is important, I support it by a well-expressed sentiment from the pen of Robert Dale Owen, who writes: "As soon as we find in a succession of examples a class of phenomena (no matter how extraordinary or inexplicable it may seem), the chance of its being genuine is very greatly increased."

"A phenomenon may be deemed to be improbable so long as it appears to be only one of a class."

"But so soon as we have grouped around it others of a similar nature, we have brought to bear one of the strongest arguments to sustain the probability of its existence."

It would perhaps be more proper to sum up my argument at the end of my letter, as I did within my last, but this passage from Mr. Owen tempts me to explain that if around the apparently miraculous and spiritual healing at Knock, in the first place, I then go on in the second place to group around them, the precisely same phenomena in France at the better known Grotto of Lourdes, the two together may be accounted as one class of orthodox miraculous cures.

All this granted, I submit it will go hard with the Bishop if I pass on one step further, and in the third place, group round this class of orthodox miraculous or spiritual cures the thousandfold larger volume of modern spiritual cures. That is my design and my argument, and in urging it I feel myself to be strictly doing the Bishop's work, for which he ought to pay one, at least by some kind of acknowledgment, for existent phenomena in these days, must have been existent phenomena in the days of St. James, and to teach the truth of the writings of St. James is the Bishop's work.

As a rule, narratives of what look like miraculous cures in earlier and later times, are at once accounted for on the hypothesis of error of testimony; but whether I speak 1st of those at Knock; 2nd, those at Lourdes; 3rd, those in the history of Modern Spiritualism; or, 4th, those which the Bishop tells us were common in the days of St. James, I equally apply to them all a line of reasoning as follows, and which I have quoted on the flyleaf of my copy of "Our Lady of Lourdes," taking it from the writings of Dr. W. Gregory, than whom we can find no more trustworthy reasoner. He says: "To believe that all who have been the subjects and chief witnesses to phenomena of this character have been impostors; and that all observers have at best been duped by these impostors makes an infinitely more startling demand upon our credulity than does faith in the most apparently marvellous of the alleged phenomena; and it is truly worthy of remark, that many truly worthy and estimable persons who reject such phenomena with disdain, and regard those who admit them as the victims of a weak credulity and love of the wonderful, should exhibit in their own persons a credulity so enormous as is required to believe that imposture has not only been practised on men of the greatest acuteness, but successfully practised on all these witnesses."

Our good Bishop must be one of these worthy and estimable persons spoken of, if his credulity is so enormous as to believe all witnesses deceived whose evidence I have and shall quote in relation with Knock, Lourdes, and Modern Spiritualism. If he does believe in the evidence, then how does the following case square with his theory of "no wonders now-a-day?"

"Our Lady of Lourdes," pages 104, 105, 107, 108, and 111. "The writer of these lines had the happiness to see and converse very lately with a man who had been instantaneously cured by drinking a little of the precious water from the Grotto of Lourdes, in the month of May last. The following are the particulars of the case:

Sister Columba was one day in Oct., 1869, engaged in dusting the shutters in the convent, when the step-ladder slipped and she fell to the floor. The doctor considered the case hopeless. Thus she continued till the following May. At that time her injured leg had shrunk to about the thickness of two inches. Having obtained the consent of the Infirmary to take a little water, they said the prayer of the Novena, and each drank a small glass of the water; at the same moment, when sister Columba said at once, 'I feel that I can walk,' and jumping off the couch ran round the room. Soon after this wonderful event, the shrunk and wasted leg of sister Columba returned to its natural shape and size, and to a perfectly healthy state, and every mark of the wound very soon disappeared. It is now Feb. 1871, nine months since her sudden cure, and she has ever since been quite well. It only requires to be added that this account has been written by the author of this work, and is here published with the full permission of the Right Rev. Bishop of Birmingham.

"This humble, sweet child, 'Bernadette,' was the medium of these manifestations and the chosen instrument in the hands of that God who chooses the weak things of the world that he may confront the strong, as witnessed in the wonderful and astonishing events connected with the Grotto of the Apparition."

It will thus appear, Mr. Editor, that the oldest, the greatest and the most orthodox of our churches, can just as readily advance its wonderful cures and spiritual mediums, as the *Harbinger of Light*. Do you refuse to allow me to group you after that fashion? If so, I refer you to my motto and Mr. Edward Maitland's notions of the sameness of origin of beneficent and wonderful phenomena.

If instead of contenting myself with this one case, I had taken just one hundred from Knock and Lourdes; would the Bishop like, first, to read over Dr. Gregory's notions of the Law of Evidence, and then meet all those hundred cases (which I could as easily have selected), with bald negation?

I shall now leave orthodoxy and pass over to heterodoxy, but keep equally near to heaven and its world of

wonders, or what, with Mr. Henry Maitland, I understand to be divinity—and divinity of a character that will make cures by the laying on of hands a thing as much of the present as of the past.

If the Bishop will only yield to me and believe in one character of miraculous cures (Knock and Lourdes, for instance), room will then be made in his mind for such other cures now-a-day as took place in the days of St. James. To this end I quote for the information of the Bishop and his flock from the 246, 201, 193, and 196 pages of Tracts on Spiritualism, by Judge Edmonds—"In healing mediumship (although always avoiding it as a profession), my wife has had marked success. In two instances she has restored sight to the blind. Her manner of cure is to pass the hand briskly over the throat and chest, dipping it often in pure soft water." Judge Edmonds writes: "What shall we do with this evidence? We cannot deny the fact, for human testimony cannot thus be disregarded, and the question will be asked, wherein has man's nature so changed, since the days of old, that what he was once capable of he cannot do again? To regard it as deception would demand a degree of credulity far surpassing that which we demand for the testimony."

For my part, when I beheld performed at this day, in our very midst, nearly all the wonders recorded in the New Testament, on which the Christian religion has justly reposed its claims to a divine origin, I pause in breathless awe and reverently acknowledge,

"The hand that made them is divine."

But there is a more remarkable though less frequent mode of healing, and that is by simply laying on of hands. The following is a brief summary of some of the instances of this.—

W. O. Page has cured rheumatism by once laying on of hands. Dr. C. D. Griswold, of Buffalo, thus cured a case of shaking palsy, from which the patient had been suffering for some seven weeks.

John Scott, of No 36 Bond-street, New York, is now receiving at his house from 40 to 100 patients per day, and is working many strange cures, principally by the imposition of hands. In this way he has made cures where the limbs were drawn up and distorted; total blindness; a club foot from birth, and also restored withered limbs; and all this, I repeat, by simply laying on of hands.

This is enough to show the existence of the phenomena now as of old.

Bolton, in his work on the Evidence of Christianity says: "All parties agree in allowing a miracle if it can be proved authentic, is one of the strongest evidences any cause can possess."

Now, when we reflect that healing the sick is one of the miracles referred to by all those champions of Christianity, may we not ask what there is to change its character, or the character of the evidence, when applied to Modern Spiritualism.

It will be observed that these cases (each only one in ten thousand), all refer to the cures by laying on of hands; which the Bishop does not believe in; and further teaches us that no sober man ought to believe in such a mode of cure. Yet surely there could have been nothing less miraculous in any one of these cases than those of the days of St. James, when the Bishop allows such cures were quite common. If such phenomena occurred once, they must have been phenomena of universal nature, and the gifts of the Spirit, and granting such once did occur, we cannot logically or consistently deny not only the possibility of their occurring again, but we cannot even deny the necessity of and for their recurrence, more so as we cannot date the cessation.

When I had written so far, a voice came to me from amongst the gum trees of the far north of this continent (in the columns of a Queensland Spiritual journal, the *Telephone*, of the 29th April), and I am sure the Bishop would be interested could I point out to him how exactly it made an echo to all I have written.

That you and your readers may judge, Mr. Editor, I make a short extract from it—"My object is to prove to my orthodox friends who believe in divine inspiration

of Scripture that, without admitting it, they are in reality Spiritualists; for, if they deny the possibility of spirit manifestations in the present day, how can they expect others to admit the existence of similar manifestations in former days, such for instance as the healing the sick by the laying on of hands."

There are men who consider it a mark of superior wisdom to utterly deny that angels can now appear to human beings; and yet without knowing how such a thing is possible, they believe that angels appeared to persons enumerated in the Bible. "Oh, that," they say, "was then permitted for a wise and special purpose; but the age of miracles is past." [This is just the Bishop's position with respect to the gift of healing.] Thus by a few words of lofty self-assertion they dismiss the subject as unworthy of argument, and boldly affirm that the man who believes in Spiritualism, stands self-condemned, as suitable for a lunatic asylum (or an "inebriate asylum," according to the Bishop, if he believes in those cases I have recorded of healing by the laying on of hands) If our orthodox friends deny that mediums do see spirits, or heal by the laying on of hands, do they not perceive that they are cutting from under their feet the very foundation of their own faith.

No wonder that Materialists ridicule the possibility of occurrences no more miraculous than healing the sick with a touch, or any one of the other events of which we read in the Gospels.

It is time that Christians should take it to heart that Spiritualism, instead of being a destroyer, is indeed a BULWARK OF CHRISTIANITY.

This, Mr. Editor, shall be my last quotation; and in apologising for the space I have taken up, I am disposed to put the fault on my friends, the Roman Catholic dignitaries and American jurists; I have myself only said a little and to the point (especially to the Bishop), and I will now sum up my argument as follows:—

FIRST.

- 1.—The Bishop of Melbourne vouches for the cures in the days of St. James (quite common).
- 2.—Archdeacon Cav-nagh vouches for the cures at Knock (in hundreds).
- 3.—The Bishop of Birmingham vouches for the cures at Lourdes (in hundreds).
- 4.—Judge Edmonds vouches for the cures by the laying on of hands (in tens of thousands).

I believe them all, and the divinity of them, and exclaim, "one sample, one sack; one sack, one sample."

SECOND.

I appeal to the laws of human testimony, as noticed by Dr. Gregory, and maintain that all these four classes of cures by occult power are all equally well attested, and that neither the Bishop or any other man, can accept one class and reject contemptuously the others, without forfeiting his reputation for consistency.

THIRD.

The good of the whole of this divine philosophy is simply this, viz.: That it plants its foot firmly down upon a vile monster whose organisation is made up of one-half *Materialism*, and the other half *Atheism*, avowed, or secret, or half-hearted; and it demonstrates a world of spiritual and occult influences, operating round about us—a belief that mankind has never been without, and a belief that our Bishops and clergy should willingly inculcate by accepting the helping hand of all occult phenomena of universal nature that comes under their ken.—I am sir, yours, etc.,

ROBERT CALDECOTT.

P.S.—In case this letter should reach the eye of the Bishop, will he be kind enough to pay attention to the first six lines of the preface of the book from whence I have taken my motto? They run as follows:—

"The production of this book was accompanied and followed by phenomena of such a character as to leave no doubt on the minds of the writer and others who witnessed them, that it contains a *Revelation from the spirit world*, which is destined to constitute it one of the world's Bibles. Written under the control of a spirit claiming to be the same that spoke through the prophets of the Old and New Testaments."

DARWIN AND EMERSON.

Our great men one by one are leaving us, making room, it is hoped, for the coming great. The whirlwind of time has just snatched from our view and lifted into the everlasting light two of the greatest actors that have appeared upon this century's stage. Charles Darwin, Europe's foremost naturalist, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, America's profoundest philosopher, have been borne hence.

Between these two noble men how wide a contrast! Working to one aim, yet how different their methods, how variant their characteristics! Darwin, the naturalist, studying the material manifestations of being, examining *fauna* and *flora* and all the strange wonders of island life; Emerson, the thinker, climbing the intellectual heights, bathing in the sea of Spirit, meditating on Soul and Mind, on Immortality and things divine. Darwin, toiling often in the dark and gloom of earth, yet, like those humble creatures described in his last monograph *On Worms*, performing a vast and immortal work. Emerson, skirting the empyrean, sailing on seraph wings through airy realms of philosophic thought. Darwin, cautious and accurate in statement though often awkward in expression, ever seeking to verify and if need be correct previous conclusions—patient, modest; Emerson, eloquent, from whose pen fall polished sentences as diamond dew-drops fall from trembling leaves, but careless, inexact, prone to exaggeration, rash and haughty.

Regarding the personal history of these well-known men, little need here be said. Charles Darwin, M.A., F.R.S., Honorary LL.D. and M.D., was born in Shrewsbury, England, in February, 1809. His father was Dr. Robert Darwin, F.R.S.; and his grandfather, Dr. Erasmus Darwin, the poet and philosopher. After a successful scholastic and university career, Darwin's instincts as a naturalist strongly developed themselves, and he was appointed to accompany H.M.S. *Beagle* on its survey of South America and circumnavigation of the globe. The young man's genius was manifested in the part he took in this survey, and led him to prosecute his studies in natural history—a subject to which he has devoted the remainder of his long and useful life.

Dr. Darwin's name is most familiar in connection with a theory of the origin of Species—especially the Human Species—known as DARWINISM. Though Darwin was not the first to formulate the doctrine that existing types of life are descendants of pre-existing types (that theory having been foreshadowed by Lucretius, Lamarck, and Erasmus Darwin—not to mention others) nevertheless to him is due the great doctrine of the evolution of species by Variation and Natural Selection.* To elaborate or expound the Evolution hypothesis here is not our purpose, still it may be well to correct a very common misapprehension of it—one, which only a few Sundays since, we heard proclaimed from a fashionable pulpit in the metropolis. The misrepresentation is that this doctrine teaches Man as sprung from Monkeys. Such a statement is absurd; all that our theory urges is that Man and Ape have come from some common ancestral form. Professor Tyndall in his Birmingham Address has put the matter with characteristic eloquence and conciseness:—

"We who are now 'foremost in the files of time' have come to the front through almost endless stages of promotion from lower to higher forms of life. If to any one of us were given the privilege of looking back through the mists across which life has crept toward its present outcome, his vision would ultimately reach a point when the progenitors of this assembly could not be called human. From that humble society, through the interaction of its members and the storing up of their best qualities, a better one emerged; from this again a better still, until at length, by the integration of infinitesimals through ages of amelioration, we came to be what we are to-day."

Darwin's theory (which two years ago attained its "majority") though at first greeted with opprobrium, may now be said to command the well-nigh universal assent of naturalists. "One could count on one's

fingers," says Fiske, "the number of eminent naturalists who still decline to adopt it." And Professor Huxley, its most popular exponent, tells us that "as matters now stand, the doctrine of Evolution is no longer a speculation, it is historical fact"—"the whole evidence is in its favour, and there is none against it."

The other subject of this sketch—Ralph Waldo Emerson, LL.D., was the son of the Rev. William Emerson, and was born in May 1803, in Boston, U.S.A. In early years he evinced remarkable powers, and great aptitude for study; and after a high training he graduated at Harvard in 1821. For three years he held the pastorate of a Unitarian congregation in Boston, subsequently resigning in consequence of expanding thought; and shortly after, he settled down to the quiet life of the "Concord Philosopher."

Emerson's public services comprise Lectures, Poems, and Essays—all of exception-l originality and high merit. Criticisms on his works have, of course, been many and various. That critics like Mr. Joseph Cook, who has dilated to considerable extent upon Emerson's teachings, should fail to understand or correctly represent his philosophy, is only to be expected; but it is rather surprising to find the writer of a notice in *Chamber's Cyclopaedia of English Literature* saying, "The ethical writings of Mr. Emerson are of little value His style—apparently modelled after that of Carlyle—is marred by affectation and conceits." That his style is similar to Carlyle's (his *status* among men of letters in America is that of Carlyle in England) may be true, but it is often superior to Carlyle's, terser, more epigrammatic, nobler, and more sympathetic; it is perhaps peculiar and eccentric, often even infelicitous, but not marred by affectation or conceits. And to say that his ethical works are almost devoid of value, is the veriest misrepresentation. Mr. Emerson's teachings are the purest and noblest; their influence has been great, and is destined to increase. "If any one," says Professor Tyndall, "can be said to have given the impulse to my mind, it is Emerson. Whatever I have done, the world owes to him." And Charles Bradlaugh, the indefatigable, if somewhat erratic, apostle of reform in England, confesses, "I ascribe to Mr. Emerson's essay on Self-Reliance my first step in the career I have adopted. Twenty-six years ago, when too poor to buy a book, I copied parts of that famous lecture."

Space would fail us to give any adequate representation of what this gifted and original thinker has taught. To his principal works we must ask our readers to go; in few ways can money be more advantageously expended, or time more profitably consumed, than in their procurement and study. His latest religious utterances were delivered before the Free Religious Association, of which he remained a member up to the time of his decease; though nothing has issued from his pen during the last ten years. Dr. Emerson has never formulated his creed, but an attentive study of his works shows him to be a THEIST, very much of the school of Theodore Parker, Carlyle, and Goethe. Vital elements of his theistic belief are the *immanence of God* in all things, the "ever-presentness" of the Divine energy, which permeates everything—from planet to pebble, from thrilling sunbeam to the human soul; and that God, he says, is *absolutely good*. With these two premises it is inevitable that Emerson should be an OPTIMIST, holding that the helm of the Universe is guided by a Power all-good, all-just; that infinite Love subdents all worlds and is drawing all things into itself. For old faiths, though outgrown by him, this philosopher has great respect; he reveres the Bible; for Christ he feels the tenderest love; but he will worship with no traditional creed.

"We are in transition," he says, "from the worship of the fathers, which enshrined the law in a private and personal history, to a worship which recognises the true eternity of the law, its presence to you and me, its equal energy in what is called brute-nature as in what is called sacred history. The next age will behold God in the ethical laws—as mankind begins to see them in this age, self-equal, self-executing, instantaneous, and self-affirmed, needing no voucher, no prophet, and no miracle besides their own irresistibility—and will regard natural history, private fortunes, and politics, not for themselves, as we have done, but as illustrations of those laws, of that beatitude and love. Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the *osk* breaks in everywhere." (Essay on "The Preacher.")

* Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace shares with Dr. Darwin the honour of the discovery.

To this Preacher of Righteousness, then, to this Prophet of the True in an age of shams, to this strong-souled, clear-minded man who, free from the shackles of Superstition, could yet proclaim the glorious Gospel of God and Soul; and to that other one—interpreter of Nature, veteran of Science, genius, scholar: to them, be our reverent homage paid. Standing on the star-lit heights of time, they are as beacon-lights bidding us bravely travel the paths of Science, and scale the steep of Thought. By the consecration of their powers to Man and God, by the integrity of their motives, the purity of their lives, they are to us a fountain of perennial inspiration, inciting to pure resolve and honest deed—to TRUTH and RIGHT.

JOTTINGS ON PASSING EVENTS.

CIRCUMSTANCES interfered with a personal revision of the "proofs" of last month's "Jottings," and consequently I have to apologise for a few inaccuracies. Passing over some trivial errors in spelling, I must point out that "Dr." Henry Bergh should have been plain Mr. Henry Bergh, that Professor Fisher's initials are "G.F.," and that "Dr. Sandon" must give place to "Dr. Sanday."

I have no wish to intrude upon the discussion between Mr. H. J. Browne and "True Blue" on the subject of FREE-WILL, but I do not think the latter writer is quite justified in saying that *all* the great British eclectics are advocates of NECESSITY. There are some eminent men, like Professor Huxley, who hold that the contest is and always will be "a drawn battle;" while other advanced thinkers, among whom, I believe, may be mentioned Principal Martineau, James Anthony Froude, M.A., LL.D., C. B. Upton, B.A., B.Sc. (Professor in Manchester New College), Professor J. Estlin Carpenter, M.A., and J. G. Schurman, M.A., D.Sc. (Hibbert Scholar), urge with Mr. Browne that the human will is free.

The overture submitted to the Presbyterian Commission by the Rev. William Henderson of Ballarat, is an important one. It is to the effect that men of intelligence and character, who may for various reasons have been prevented from holding office in the church, be admitted to the counsels and have the right to represent presbyteries in the General Assembly. At present only the clergy and elders possess those privileges. Mr. Henderson's proposal, if it be entertained, will quite possibly do away with not a few abuses. The introduction of laymen of "intelligence" into the Assembly will be like letting the sunlight into a damp room.

Agitation on the "Vaccination Question" seems to be increasing. The *North American Review* for April contains a reply by Dr. H. A. Martin to Mr. Bergh's strictures on the practice. The doctor recommends "vaccination with the virus obtained by exclusively bovine transmission of original cow-pox." Humanised lymph, he admits, sometimes introduces syphilis and erysipelas.

The debate on Baptism between the Rev. B. Butchers (Wesleyan) and Mr. J. J. Haley (Baptist, or, rather, "Disciple of Christ") came off last month. For five successive evenings very large audiences assembled in the Temperance Hall to hear this momentous subject argued *pro* and *con*. The disputants were courteous and orderly, but the congregation was often quite the reverse. "Christian feeling," when aroused, can hold its own against "political rowdiness" any day. As regards the disputants, Mr. Butchers impressed me as being the better scholar and the more gentlemanly; but Mr. Haley is undoubtedly the abler debater; he is well-up in his subject, quick-witted, clear-headed, and incisive. There are indications that the Peco-Baptists (Mr. Butchers' party) are not quite satisfied with the results. The *Wesleyan Spectator* says it regrets "any discussion on the subject of baptism should have been necessary," and it remarks that "like all such public discussions,

the debate was not altogether satisfactory." Mr. Haley and his friends, however, are jubilant over the matter. In his organ, the *Christian Watchman*, he thus concludes a self-complacent review of the discussion. "If our Wesleyan friends have not yet got 'enough,' let them intimate the fact, and we will engage the best man they can put into the field, at any time or in any place." Does it not seem a pity that Mr. Haley should waste his dialectical talents in exposing the unsoundness of a belief held by the majority of his fellow Christians? Surely he would be rendering much greater service to the cause he has at heart, if, instead of defending some paltry outpost, he were to attend to the assaults that are being made upon the very citadel of "Christianity." The gentleman cannot be unaware of Mr. Thomas Walker's work in this city, or of the fact that the "infidel lecturer" has challenged several Christian advocates to a public debate.

As the *Southern Cross* and other "religious" journals have endeavoured to make capital out of Professor Goldwin Smith's attack upon Herbert Spencer's basis of Morality as enunciated in his "Data of Ethics," it may be well to draw attention to Mr. Spencer's brief article in the *Contemporary Review* (March) wherein he exposes the Professor's misrepresentations. It is perfectly astonishing how men of intelligence and culture so grossly misunderstand and pervert the teachings of our great philosophers. Dr. Farrar and Professor Huxley's misrepresentations of Hume, and now Professor Goldwin Smith's fallacies regarding Spencer, are cases in point.

Mr. Thomas Walker professes himself a Darwinian, and ably expounds an "Evolution" theory; but he out-Darwins Darwin. The great naturalist admits (as Wallace says), "an influx of life from the Creator at first." Mr. Walker dispenses with all such primitive Causation; he criticises Denton for claiming a spiritual origin for Man, and holds to the all-sufficiency of purely material causes. Does Mr. Walker really think that Matter possesses intelligence and the power of choice?

It is quite amusing to observe how the religious journals, in reviewing the "Rev." J. A. Dowie's pamphlet, speak of it as exposing the "immorality of Spiritualistic writings." What rare discriminating faculty and judgment the editors must possess! Mr. Walker's reply to Dowie, will, I understand, issue from the press in a few days.

OCCULT PHENOMENA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HARBINGER OF LIGHT."
SIR,—While in Bombay, in the early part of the year, I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, and of spending a few days under their hospitable roof, at Breach Candy. Of course the conversation often turned on Occult Phenomena, and I heard many strange stories; but I will relate only what came under my own observation.

One evening the usual daily bundle of letters and papers was brought in. One letter was found to contain some writing with red pencil, in quite a different hand from the body of the letter, and signed with a sort of monogram. This I was told was the writing of a Himalayan brother, who frequently commented on their correspondents' letters in that way. Col. Olcott then remarked that perhaps other letters contained like comments, and he asked me to examine some unopened letters, and then open them myself. I did so, and felt sure the envelopes had not been tampered with. Two on being opened exhibited red writing in the same hand as the first. The envelopes, which I retained, showed the post marks of Meerut, 28th Jan.; Cawnpore, 28th Jan., and Hyderabad, 29th Jan.—places covering ten degrees of latitude—and all these were stamped Bombay, 31st Jan. Next day, atiffin, while talking on this subject of the letters, it was remarked that if I were to receive any letters while there I might get similar writing in them. I replied that there was no chance of that as nobody would be writing to me. In a little while

Madame Blavatsky looked fixedly before her a few seconds, and then said to me, "You won't believe me, and will call it an illusion; but I saw one of the brothers there—the one who writes in the letters." By and by, she added, "There he is again; not distinct—he speaks to me." After listening for a little, she said: "He wishes to know if you would like some communication." I replied that I would be much gratified. Madame B., rising from the table, added: "He says it is a very small matter;" and then she asked Col. Olcott and myself (the only persons present) to follow her. Taking my hand, she led me along the verandah, stopping occasionally at different points, until on reaching the room which I had occupied as a bedroom she desired me to look if there was anything in it I had not noticed before, and to close the other openings into it. I did so; it was a large room, with only a few articles of furniture. She then asked Col. Olcott and myself to sit down on two chairs which happened to be near the middle of the room, while she stood before me and held both my hands, immediately a letter fell at my feet from some level above my head. The Colonel, who had a better point of view, said it came from a height of six or seven feet from the ground. Picking it up I found a plain envelope (gummed) and inside there was a sheet of note-paper, bearing a Government stamp of the North-West Provinces and Oudh, and containing writing in pencil exactly like that in the letters the previous evening, and with the same signature. It began: "No chance of writing to you inside your letters, but I can write direct"—and then a sentence followed personal to myself. The words I had spoken at the table a few minutes before were thus made use of. I have the written testimony of both Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott that they have no knowledge of any such paper as the sheet used having ever been in the house.

If any of your readers should be inclined to think that all this might have been brought about by prearrangement, and by ordinary (although clever) means, I have only to say that the difficulties appear to me to be enormous, if not insuperable, and that several accomplices must have been employed, who thereby would have the power at any time of making an exposure; and finally, to express my absolute conviction that neither Madame Blavatsky nor Col. Olcott would lend themselves to any such deception.—Yours, etc.,

VIATOR.

Naples, March, 1882.

[Were we at liberty to publish the name of our correspondent, our readers would have confidence in his statements on account of his scientific status and known acumen.—*Ed. H. of L.*]

MR. SPRIGGS' MATERIALIZATION SEANCES.

SINCE the publication of our last month's report, the manifestations have pursued their usual course, presenting in addition some new features, which we will put before our readers. At the sitting on the 25th April, three visitors were present. Geordie, Zion, Peter, Charity, and the other controls, presented themselves, and a very striking figure, quite unfamiliar to the members of the circle, materialised most distinctly and strongly, although for the first time. The form was tall and gaunt, with small head and long thin arms, which were moved about with great energy, the body being at the same time bent to and fro with great flexibility. It was remarkably different in character to any before seen by the circle, but was recognised by one of the visitors (a lady medium), as one who had previously promised to show himself; if possible, in the material form—who was a native of some other country, and whom she frequently saw clairvoyantly. This materialisation drew very powerfully upon the sensitives in the circle.

The sitting on the evening of May 9th was by arrangement devoted to the children, six of whom attended. Geordie came amongst them, distributing flowers, shaking hands with them cordially, and evidently doing all he could to inspire them with confidence, as one or two of the younger ones exhibited at first a little timidity.

A letter addressed to him by Mrs. J. was read to him, at which he was much pleased, and wrote two or three messages. Several of the other spirit-friends also materialised. Peter addressed the children in the direct voice, showing that the subject would be a great study for them as they grew older, because by studying in spirit circles they would be able to obtain a practical knowledge of the spirit-world, which was what they very much required, and they would also be able to receive messages from their friends and relations. In spirit-life children were accustomed to assemble together and were taught to obtain as much information as they could from their parents and friends who came from earth-life properly. In consequence of the power failing, Peter's remarks were at this point brought to a conclusion. Skiawaukie pointed out that several of the young people were mediumistic, and indicated what phase they would be most likely to develop.

The manifestations at the three following sittings were, owing to the indisposition of the medium and his consequent restlessness in the trance-state, which increased the difficulty on the part of the controls in utilising the necessary forces, of a less vigorous character than usual. There were no fresh developments, although the regular controls materialised, and Geordie took his usual prominent part, shaking hands with the visitors, placing his face repeatedly within a few inches of their's, lifting their hands to his forehead, and pushing back the curtain in order to show the medium.

On the evening of May 23rd the manifestations were very powerful. Eight different forms materialised. Peter quickly presented himself, and entered into conversation with the sitters. He said that a spirit giving the name "Jacob Matthews" was present, who recognised one of the visitors (a Mr. Warne, formerly—some thirty years ago—of Cardiff, Wales), as "Bill," and referred to their having bathed together, when boys, in the "River Taif." Mr. Warne confirmed the name, and the circumstance mentioned, as perfectly correct. Peter then stated that the controls were about to place the medium in a "dead trance." He then came out into the circle, and stood in front of the curtains in full view. He asked Mr. Terry to come forward, and upon the latter doing so, Peter took one of Mr. Terry's hands in his own, as they stood side by side, requesting him to place the other through the curtains upon the medium's hand. This Mr. Terry did, and stated to the other sitters that he had hold of the fingers of the medium's hand. Inadvertently he grasped the fingers of the medium's hand somewhat tightly, which instantly produced a curious and marked effect upon Peter (still standing by his side in the full view of the sitters), as he seemed to receive an unpleasant shock, and complained of pain. The five remaining members of the circle were in succession called forward for the same purpose. In each case, as soon as their hand came in contact with that of the medium (who was evidently in a very deep trance), Peter, who was standing outside holding the sitters by the hand, was observed to shrink and cry out with evident pain, and would not for some moments recover from the shock.

After the giving of this crucial test the manifestations were very strong indeed. Geordie materialised, and came forward with great vigour, shook hands, placed his face close to the visitors, raised their hands close to his forehead, asked for more light, stood in the full glare, drew aside the curtain to show the medium again, so that the sense of sight, as well as of touch, might bear the same testimony; handed round some flowers which had been presented to him, sat for some time in the chair by Mr. Carson's side, rose again, passed through the circle and out of the door into the front premises; repeated this several times, bringing into the circle-room various objects therefrom, and carrying them back again, and returning finally, again showed the medium. One of the visitors present happened to state that he came from Durham, in England; whereupon, Geordie walked rapidly towards him, and shook him with great heartiness by the hand. Proceeding to the writing-desk, he wrote and handed him the following message: "Dear old friend,—I am pleased to meet one from the bonny old country. I cannot stay longer to

write. From Geordie, late of Newcastle, but now a resident in the Summer-land." Geordie then bade the circle farewell, though with evident reluctance, and was followed by Mrs. Cobham, the latter being followed with striking rapidity by the tall form of Zion, who materialised very strongly, and also displayed great vigour, lifting a heavy wooden chair by the back, and swinging it several times up over his head. He retired in due course, and in a little over a minute was followed by the slender form of "The Nun," with the long curls hanging down over her shoulders. She remained for a short time, and then gave place to the child Lily, who spoke of her "aunt" and parents, and bowed most gracefully. After her retirement, a male form, under the medium height, materialised with great distinctness. This friend was new to the regular members of the circle, but indicated that he was known to the Mr. Warne before referred to. Motioning for writing materials, he wrote and handed for that gentleman the name "John Williams, Cardiff." Mr. Warne said he had known someone of that name—once a fellow apprentice—but he had been a big man. The spirit-friend then wrote the word "Ironmonger," upon which Mr. Warne at once recognised the name as that of a Sunday-school teacher of his many years ago, who was of small build. Some references which were made by John Williams to old times were confirmed by Mr. Warne, and the former gave through Peter a message that he was pleased to see one of his old scholars investigating, and advised him to go on. "Charity" came out very well indeed; and Ski concluded the sitting by giving the sitters some interesting information after his peculiar fashion.

On the evening of May 26th the manifestations were again very strong. Seven different forms materialised, viz., Zion, Peter, Geordie, Mrs. Cobham, the Nun, Lily, and Charity. Geordie walked about with great activity, even dancing a little to some lively music, coming up to the visitors and shaking hands with them vigorously, placing his face close to their eyes so that they could see every lineament of it, evidently for the purpose of enabling them to compare it with that of the medium, and then lifting their hands to his face, so that they might be convinced through the sense of touch that it was natural. He requested an increase of light, which was given until Mr. Terry stood holding it in his hand, the rays falling direct upon the form, illuminating it brightly from head to foot. Geordie drew back the curtain and showed the visitors the medium, whose hand they could see (as they stated) lying across his knees. The female forms materialised, and came out also with increased force. Ski spoke for a considerable time in a loud and distinct voice, giving some excellent advice to one of the visitors as to the development of his daughter's mediumship, and also to a lady visitor as to her development. He also gave the name of a spirit present, with another visitor (a complete stranger to the medium) which the visitor said was correct, and was that of his brother.

One of the tests applied this month may be considered more valuable by outsiders, because applied by a sceptic without the knowledge of the circle and with the expectation of detecting fraud. One of the sitters taking an unfair advantage of his position, contrived to smear his hand with printer's ink before grasping that of the materialised form. When the medium came into full light, the sceptic was grievously disappointed to find no trace whatever of the ink which he had impressed upon the hand of the form. The printer of this journal informs us that the stain of printer's ink could not be erased even with soap and water in a single washing. The fact, therefore, that the medium's hand was perfectly free from any trace of printer's ink is another important evidence of the distinct identity of the form. Of course this sceptic, like the rest of his class, will be still unsatisfied. Nothing raises the bile and excites the spleen of the unphilosophical sceptic more than the failure of his efforts to prove his theory.

With reference to the test given by the controls on the evening of the 23rd of May, and above described, the following ladies and gentlemen certify thereto as being the six members of the circle indicated. The

names of the visitors present on the occasion are also on record.

JOHN CARSON, Clutha, Kew, near Melbourne.
MRS. WATSON, Yarra Grange, Simpson's Road, do.
W. H. TERRY, 84 Russell-street, Melbourne.
ELIZA ANDREW, 240 Albert-street, East Melbourne.
A. J. SMART, 66 Nicholson-street, Fitzroy, do.
MARTHA BAMFORD, Lygon-street, North Carlton.

P.S.—In our next we shall give a summary of the records of the Materialisation Séances, showing in a concise form the evidences in support of the phenomena.

MR. THOMAS WALKER.

Mr. Walker's lectures at the Opera House have been largely attended during the past month, every available seat being occupied. His last lecture on the Inspiration of the New Testament clearly demonstrated that at least some portions of it were not inspired.

Since our last publication Mr. Dowie has fulfilled his threat by initiating an action for libel against Mr. Walker, laying his damages at £250. The plaint is laid in the County Court and set down for hearing next week. Mr. Walker's friends and supporters have formed a committee and are raising a defence fund which has been liberally subscribed to.

In this country (America) for many years our physical mediums have been insulted, ridiculed, and called frauds by those entirely ignorant of the subtle laws of mediumship; by bigoted theologians; by others who style themselves "harmonial philosophers;" by non-immortalists, who may be classed as "delusionists;" and not only under all those obstacles did these medial martyrs prove that the phenomena were true by absolute demonstration, but others who have followed them in the good work are doing so in various portions of the world at the present time. Notwithstanding these facts, mediums to-day for form-materialisation are treated in the like manner as those who have preceded them. But the worst feature of this whole matter is that there are men and women in our ranks to-day who are, for special reasons of their own, using every means in their power, *secretly* as well as openly, to cast obloquy upon our mediums. They may retard the work somewhat, but they will not succeed in crushing out the divine gift of mediumship. That this power unquestionably exists every true Spiritualist is fully aware.—*Banner of Light* Leader.

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Owing to pressure upon our space G. V. S.'s letter upon the Bishop's charges against the *Harbinger*, the Messago Department and other Contributions are unavoidably held over.

PROFESSOR WILLIAM DENTON.

Professor Denton's tour through New Zealand has been a highly successful one, wherever he has lectured he has had good audiences, and the leading papers gave highly favorable reports. At Christchurch he lectured to large assemblages for a month; our last advices are from Wellington, whence, after calling at some minor towns he would proceed to Auckland. He may be expected here in about two months to fulfil his long pending engagement with the Victorian Association of Spiritualists.

The *Theosophist* for April contains some good things, one on "Astrology" we purpose reproducing if space permits, in the next issue of this paper. We regret however, to find in its columns under the heading of "A Sad Look-out," an extract from a letter which we feel convinced is a libel on English Spiritualists. We are surprised that a journal of the status of our contemporary should publish *ex parte* statements from an evidently prejudiced source reflecting upon a body of persons whose intelligence and morality has not been impugned save by rabid Christians: opponents who have never substantiated their assertions. We have little doubt the writer of the slander will be called to account by some of our London Spiritualists.

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